

## ANC takes initiatives to press freedom struggle

BY GREG McCARTAN

The African National Congress announced a set of initiatives to press forward the fight to end apartheid following a leadership meeting February 16.

The ANC National Executive Committee, meeting at its headquarters in exile in Lusaka, Zambia, decided to "send a delegation into South Africa" to meet with "the leaders of the ANC who are inside South Africa, as well as those of the Mass Democratic Movement

**Nelson Mandela's Soweto speech, ANC statement on pages 10-11**

and other anti-apartheid forces." (See ANC statement on page 10.)

It also "resolved to meet [South African president] Mr. de Klerk as soon as possible to discuss with him" releasing all political prisoners, ending the state of emergency, the repeal of all repressive legislation, removal of troops from the townships, and halting political trials to create "a climate conducive to negotiations."

The statement also announced the formation of a committee to "begin the work of reestablishing the ANC within the country," and that the next national conference of the liberation organization will take place in

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## After coal strike, what's ahead in miners' fight?

### Defense of miners, continued labor solidarity



Ilana Storace  
Striking union coal miners at Pittston's Moss No. 3 preparation plant in Carbo, Virginia, in September. Pittston miners, who just signed contract, won widespread solidarity in their 11-month fight. Miners can now turn to getting all miners' jobs back and union fines dropped, and to backing Eastern and other strikers. For story of Pittston strike see page 8.

In the course of their 11-month strike against Pittston Coal Group, which ended February 19, union miners, who began by confronting Pittston's drive to break their union, accomplished more than they set out to, as they turned to the entire labor movement and won solidarity for their strike.

Members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) at Pittston reached out

## EDITORIAL

to — and won a response from — tens of thousands of workers across the country and worldwide who were inspired by the fight and moved to add the weight of their unions to the side of the battling miners.

Most significantly, the striking miners met workers involved in another key labor battle: International Association of Machinists members on strike against Frank Lorenzo's Eastern Airlines. For the first time in more than four decades, two nationwide fights were unfolding simultaneously and reinforcing each other. Striking miners and Eastern workers linked up and strengthened each others' battles and became co-combatants who increasingly saw the two fights as one — each with high stakes for all of labor.

Through these experiences in battle, Pittston strikers were transformed into people fighting not just for themselves but for all workers.

"Let's not quit now; let's continue the fight we got started," said Pittston miner James "Buzz" Hicks the night miners approved the contract. Hicks' statement sums up the spirit of thousands of workers who have been changed by the Eastern and Pittston strikes. Many, many workers have been inspired by the battle at Pittston and,

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## March 3-4 actions celebrate anniversary of year-long battle at Eastern Airlines

In cities throughout the United States and Canada, striking Eastern Airlines Machinists and thousands of other unionists will be rallying on the March 3-4 weekend to mark the year's anniversary of the strike against Frank Lorenzo's Eastern Airlines. These important actions have the backing of the AFL-CIO and many state and local labor bodies. We urge readers to let us know about any additional solidarity activities in your cities.

**BALTIMORE.** March 4, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Picket and rally at Baltimore-Washington International Airport. Reception with speakers to follow in Airport Conference Room.

**BERKELEY, California.** March 2, 12 noon. Building rally for March 3 action at San Francisco International Airport. University of California at Berkeley, Sproul Hall steps.

**BOSTON.** March 4, 1:00 p.m. Rally at Eastern terminal, Logan International Airport. Free parking and shuttle buses from IAW Local 1726 hall, 830 Saratoga St., East Boston, leave at 12:00 noon. Victory Party to follow rally.

**BUFFALO, New York.** March 4, evening. Party for strikers, their families, and supporters at United Auto Workers (UAW) hall.

**CHICAGO.** March 3, 3:00 p.m. Labor Solidarity Rally, Teamsters Local 705 hall, 300 S. Ashland. Speakers include Tony

Kujawa, International Executive Board, United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

**DETROIT.** March 2, 7:30 p.m. Celebration at West Side UAW Local 174 hall, 6495 W. Warren (at Cicotte, two blocks west of Livernois). Special guest: Pittston coal strike veteran James Gibbs. Food, music, dancing. Tickets: \$10 each; proceeds to Eastern strikers.

**GREENSBORO, North Carolina.** March 4, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Labor solidarity day at Piedmont Triad International Airport.

**KANSAS CITY.** March 4, 2:30 p.m. Rally near Kansas City International Airport, at gravel lot by Mexico street. For more information, call Eastern strike office at (816) 464-2833.

**LOUISVILLE, Kentucky.** March 3, 12 noon to 2:00 p.m. Expanded picket line at Standiford Field airport.

**LOS ANGELES.** March 3, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Mass picket at Terminal 6, Los Angeles International Airport. Solidarity fundraising barbeque picnic, 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Westchester Park (corner of Lincoln and Manchester). Donation: \$5.

**MIAMI.** March 4, 2:00 p.m. Rally at International Association of Machinists Local 702's strike headquarters, 691 Sheridan Drive, Miami Springs. Featured speaker: IAM International President George Kourpias. Followed by mobilization at Miami International Airport.

**MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL.** March 3,

2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Rally at Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport.

**MONTREAL.** March 4, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Rally at Dorval International Airport, main terminal.

**NEW YORK/NEWARK.** March 4, 12 noon. Rally at La Guardia Airport, parking lot in front of Continental Hangar (between main terminal and Trump Shuttle terminal). Reception following, P.S. 127, corner 99th St. and 25th Ave., Queens.

**PHILADELPHIA.** March 3, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Picket and rally at Philadelphia International Airport, Terminal C Departures.

**PITTSBURGH.** March 4, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Walk-through Greater Pittsburgh International Airport.

**SAN FRANCISCO.** March 3, 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. Rally at San Francisco International Airport, South Terminal. In case of rain, meet on lower level.

**SALT LAKE CITY, Utah.** March 5 strike support activity. For more information, call AFL-CIO at (801)972-2771.

**ST. LOUIS.** March 4, 2:00 p.m. Rally at UAW Local 325 hall, 9144 Pershall Road.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** March 3, 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Picket and rally at Washington National Airport, main terminal. Benefit reception, 6:30 p.m. Featured speaker: IAM International President George Kourpias. Sheet Metal Workers Union, Carrough Plaza, 601 N. Fairfax, Alexandria, Virginia. Donation: \$5 in advance; \$10 at door.

## 'Militant' reporters heading for S. Africa

In response to the momentous events taking place in South Africa, the *Militant* is immediately sending a reporting team to southern Africa for several weeks. It will first go to Lusaka, Zambia, and then on to South Africa, where it will bring our readers first-hand coverage of this historic opening for the mass democratic movement. Reporting will include interviews with unionists, farmers, and students.

*Militant* staff writer Greg McCartan, who traveled to Zambia and Zimbabwe last August and September, will be joined by others, including a *Militant* reporter from Britain. In addition, Margrethe Siem, will be part of the team to get photographic coverage of demonstrations, conditions of life under apartheid, and individual leaders.

Readers will agree that this trip is a timely and needed initiative. The plane fares, lodgings, speedy transmission of articles and film, and other expenses go beyond our regular budget. Without contributions from our readers, we would not be able to organize this reporting trip. Send your contribution today.

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# 'Thanks for bringing us news from the world'

Over the last year hundreds of union coal miners bought their first copy of the *Militant* at strike solidarity rallies, picket shacks, marches, and other activities in support of miners on strike against Pittston Coal Group and airline workers on strike against Eastern.

In recent months many workers who read and distribute the *Militant*

reading what socialists have to say about the worsening economic situation and its impact on working people. Ten people purchased a pamphlet describing the frame-up of Iowa unionist Mark Curtis.

Two more sales teams are on the road right now, traveling to union mines in Utah and visiting Pittston miners and supporters in southwest

Rock and Kayenta area. In 1987 unionists at the three mines beat back company attempts to impose concession contracts. Miners struck for several months and successfully beat back company attempts to sow divisions in the Navajo Nation against the union.

Over several days team members talked with miners going in and out of work at the Black Mesa and Kayenta mines. The majority of workers stopped and many miners said they had seen the paper before. A total of 81 single copies and five subscriptions to the *Militant* were sold.

Later at the union hall two women miners described their efforts to form a woman's auxiliary. One bought the pamphlet *The*

*Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* and made a donation to his defense case and the other got a year's subscription to the paper.

At the McKinley mine near Window Rock miners bought 39 copies of the *Militant* at one shift change during a snowstorm. One union activist joined the team for awhile then took subscription blanks with him to sell more. In three sales at the mine, 62 papers were sold. Among the three mine portals and union halls, 147 single copies and 10 subscriptions were purchased by miners, one of whom thanked the team for "bringing in the news from the world."

## 'Next Pittston'

A *Militant* sales team traveled

through southern Illinois in early February visiting miners at 10 portals and strip mines and door-to-door in mining towns.

Team members report a firm identification by miners in the area with the Pittston strikers, with many locals having sent delegations of miners to the strikers' Camp Solidarity in Virginia.

"This is the next Pittston," said several miners at Arch of Illinois company's Captain strip mine in Percy. During the portal sale some miners had heard the company talk on the CB radio about team members and their newspaper. Some miners already had money in hand and their windows rolled down to check out the paper the company didn't like — 31 miners bought a copy of the *Militant* and four subscribed.

The team also met with a subscriber in the area who clips articles for the union bulletin board. He invited them to sell at his mine. Another miner the team met while eating in a cafe described his efforts to build solidarity with the Pittston strike, mentioning he had visited Virginia several times.

He subscribed and invited the team to sell at his mine that afternoon. Miners there, at Zeigler No. 11 in Coulterville, bought 25 single copies and five subscriptions. After the sale the team was directed to a local bar where a miner's wife running the place bought a subscription and another miner bought a single copy. All told, miners and residents in southern Illinois bought 210 copies of the paper and 23 subscriptions.

Sherrie Love from Price, Utah, contributed to this week's column.



## GETTING THE MILITANT AROUND

noticed an increased response to the paper from their co-fighters as they worked together in cities across the country building solidarity for Pittston and Eastern strikers.

Responding to this heightened interest in the *Militant* from workers, many of the paper's supporters have used their days off, vacations, and layoffs to join sales teams organized over the past two months throughout the U.S. coalfields. Team volunteers have visited coal communities, mine portals, and picket lines, introducing union miners, their families, friends, and other workers to the *Militant* and urging them to subscribe.

To date, 152 miners and mine-union backers purchased subscriptions to the *Militant* and 1,373 decided to buy a copy and see how they like it. About five dozen of the Pathfinder pamphlet *An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis* were bought by workers interested in

Virginia. Pittston signed a contract with United Mines Workers of America miners February 19.

These teams stocked up on the autobiography of freed South African fighter Nelson Mandela, *The Struggle Is My Life*, before hitting the road.

### On Navajo Nation

February 3 ended a four-day sales team to northeastern Arizona. Team members visited three union mines on the Navajo Nation, the largest reservation in the United States with more than 150,000 Native Americans. UMW contracts at the Black Mesa and Kayenta mines owned by Peabody Coal Co., and McKinley mine owned by a Chevron subsidiary, expire in May. Many miners predict a fight if the bosses try to get concessions.

Three locals of the UMW represent more than 1,000 workers, mostly Navajos, in the Window



Sales teams sold 39 copies of the *Militant* at one shift change at the McKinley mine in Arizona.

# Renewals to 'Militant' increase, single sales are up

BY JON TEITELBAUM

The international drive to sign up readers of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* to extend their subscriptions took a big step forward this week when 121 renewals were received in the business office. Two-thirds of these readers decided to continue reading the press for six months or longer. One hundred were *Militant* subscribers.

Since January 27 when the drive began, a total of 252 *Militant* and 48 *PM* renewals have come in. More *PM* renewals have been received than were sold during the entire renewal effort a year ago.

Some 124 *Militant* and 40 *PM* renewals are from readers who first subscribed during

the September–November subscription campaign last year.

Members of the International Association of Machinists are the largest single group of union members resubscribing, totaling 19 *Militants* and 1 *PM*. Supporters will be paying extra attention to subscribers who are unionists in the last few days of the drive to boost these figures.

*Militant* supporters around the world indicate that more renewals are on the way.

Paula Frampton reports that 41 readers in the Toronto area have renewed so far. Subscribers there expressed appreciation for the *Militant's* coverage of Cuba and of the Machinists strike against Eastern Airlines.

One renewal was received in the mail from a Toronto steelworker. He commented, "The Eastern strike and the struggle in South Africa show... we can't get anything without fighting."

Distributors of the *Militant* in New Zealand report that 33 renewals have been sold during the last three weeks, 19 of them for six months or longer.

### South Africa events spur sales

Sales of individual copies of the *Militant* continue to be stimulated by coverage of the events in South Africa.

The week that Nelson Mandela was released, supporters of the *Militant* who sold

out of the paper ordered nearly 800 additional copies. Even though the bundles of the paper were increased by 800 the following week, distributors have again reordered some 350 papers.

Gary Watson reports from Montréal that 113 single copies of the *Militant* were sold on the February 17–19 weekend, including 42 at a celebration with the African National Congress. And Marty Pettit reports that 38 single copies and two subscriptions were sold at two separate anti-apartheid demonstrations in Cleveland on February 17.

The renewal drive will end on February 24, and a wrap-up report will appear in the *Militant* that comes off the press on March 8.

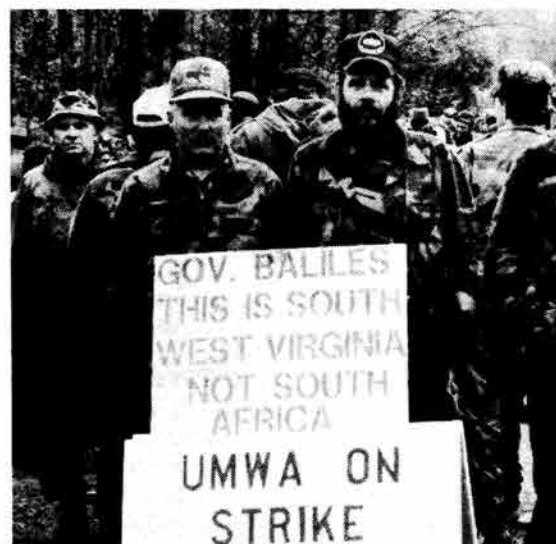
## If your subscription is running out . . . KEEP GETTING the MILITANT

Featured in the *Militant*:

The struggle of the **Appalachian and western coal miners** • Speeches of released South African freedom fighter **Nelson Mandela** • Events planned for the anniversary of the **Machinists strike against Eastern Airlines**

### SPECIAL RENEWAL OFFER

A savings on the Marxist magazine *New International*. With your *Militant* renewal of six months or longer take a dollar off the cover price of a *New International*, or get all six issues of it for \$25. Issue No. 1 features "Their Trotsky and Ours: Communist Continuity Today." No. 2 "The Working-Class Fight for Peace." No. 3 "Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government." No. 4 "The Crisis Facing Working Farmers." No. 5 "The Coming Revolution in South Africa." No. 6 "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop."



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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.



# Cuban gov't takes measures to meet grain, egg shortage

BY CINDY JAQUITH

HAVANA, Cuba — A shortage of bread and eggs hit Cuba in late January after scheduled Soviet grain shipments failed to arrive here.

On January 22 the Executive Committee of Cuba's Council of Ministers issued a communiqué announcing the steps being taken to deal with the shortages.

The communiqué explained that for 20 years the Soviet Union has sent Cuba advance shipments of grain and wheat flour in the months of November and December, toward fulfillment of agreements for shipments during the upcoming year.

However, the November-December advance shipments had still not arrived as of January 22. Part of a regular shipment scheduled to arrive from the Soviet Union in January was also delayed.

The communiqué said that "difficulties in Soviet commercial and shipping enterprises" were the cause of the problem and there was "unquestionable will on the part of the Soviet government to cooperate" to resolve the matter.

## Shortage of bread

There was a shortage of bread in some Cuban provinces, the communiqué said, as

well as a serious lack of feed grains. The latter problem was leading to a cutback in meat and egg production. The government had decided to prioritize use of feed grain for chickens that produce eggs and to reduce its use in the rest of the country's chicken, pork, and beef production.

The Cuban government had also decided to use scarce hard currency to speed up orders for wheat flour.

These measures, however, were not sufficient, the communiqué stated. Since there was "no reasonable perspective that the situation would improve immediately," the government had also decided to take the following steps:

- Reduce the daily quota of bread by 20 grams in all the country's provinces except Havana. The price would remain the same.
- In Havana, where bread is not rationed because per capita consumption is lower, raise the price by five centavos a pound.
- Reduce social consumption of bread by 10 percent, except in hospitals.
- Raise the price of eggs to 15 centavos each.

The measures on consumption and prices of bread were to go into effect February 1, and the increase in egg prices immediately.

The communiqué also noted that Cuba had



Militant/Terry Coggan

Havana supermarket. Failure of Soviet grain shipments to arrive has caused bread shortages in Cuba. Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez expressed concern at a recent Comecon meeting about that organization's moves toward a trade system based on the capitalist market. He warned of the negative impact it would have on Cuba and other underdeveloped member countries. The Soviet Union, six Eastern European countries, and Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam are in Comecon.

only shipped 100,000 of the 159,000 tons of citrus fruits it was scheduled to send to the Soviet Union in December and early January. The reason was a lack of "boats that are supposed to be in Cuban ports from Poland, East Germany, and, mainly, the Soviet Union."

Given the impossibility of freezing all the fruit, the communiqué said, 30,000 tons originally destined for export would instead be consumed in Cuba.

An article in the January 24 *Granma*, the Cuban Communist Party daily, gave an update on the grain situation. It reported that two freighters with grain, part of the Soviet Union's shipments, had arrived in Cuba, and others were heading toward the island. Half the grain the Cuban government had decided to buy with hard currency had also reached Cuba.

The article reported that Cuban officials "have explained to the Soviet leaders and functionaries the problems the delay caused us."

It went on to say, "The [Cuban] government's plan is to develop a reserve that will allow us to deal with situations of this kind to the extent possible. It will be very important for us to watch how the situation develops during 1990 and see what the future holds for our economic relations with the East European countries."

## Cubans address Comecon

The Cuban government has expressed particular concern with trade policy changes being discussed in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon).

Comecon is the economic union of Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. It coordinates trade policies among the member countries and has provided a vital market for the products of the less developed member countries such as Cuba.

But at Comecon's meeting this January, the majority of members favored moving toward a trade system based on the capitalist market, using hard currency. This would have a severe effect on Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam.

There was considerable discussion over whether and how fast to make these changes. Cuban Vice-president Carlos Rafael Rodríguez, who participated in the debate, said, "Introducing market operations into certain aspects of our economic activity does not mean having the market prevail and returning to the anarchy of production."

"Acknowledging certain forms of private property, along with the socialist ones," he said, "can't mean giving priority to private property over social property, much less forgetting its key role in the historic transformation of society."

Rodríguez urged that Comecon continue its policy of giving preferential prices to member countries that are the least developed, as a measure to overcome the unequal terms of trade these Third World countries suffer as a result of their legacy of oppression by imperialism. "All solutions of the issue of Comecon prices must uphold the principle of the gradual equality of levels between Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam and the most developed European countries," he said.

The Cuban vice-president also criticized what he called Comecon's "ignorance and underestimation of Cuban participation" in biotechnology and electronics trade agreements.

While the European members of Comecon have signed 2,500 contracts and economic agreements in science and technology, he noted, "Cuba has only signed contracts on 34" projects.

No contract has been signed with Cuba on biotechnology, he added. This is despite the fact that Cuba has pioneered in advanced treatments for meningitis, burns, and AIDS, he explained.

## 'A country which does not retreat'

"Concern about people, their well-being, the growth of their material and spiritual capabilities are the essence of socialism," Rodríguez told the Comecon meeting. "In Cuba we give top priority to everything related to the population's well-being. . . . This is a path which we must all follow."

"We will follow along this path as a country which does not retreat from the principles of socialism and Marxism-Leninism," he said.

"In spite of the dramatic difficulties affecting us all, we have faith in the future."

## Castro talks with trade unionists

Cuban President Fidel Castro, in a January 28 address to the delegates at the congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, discussed at length the impact on Cuba of the capitalist methods being applied in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

"For decades our plans and yearly and five-year programs were based on the existence of a socialist camp," he said, "on the existence of numerous socialist countries in Eastern Europe with which we worked out agreements and had close economic ties, in addition to the Soviet Union. We had reliable markets for our products and supply sources for important equipment and merchandise."

"Now in political terms that socialist camp no longer exists," Castro said.

"Comecon still exists . . . formally," he said. "It is our duty to make an effort to save it as an economic organization. But you can

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## Help distribute Mandela's 'The Struggle Is My Life'



Militant/Arthur Hughes

Selling *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life* outside a meeting of 2,000 at Riverside Church in New York that celebrated the ANC leader's release. Twenty books were sold at the event.

The campaign launched by Pathfinder, the book's publisher, and by the *Militant* to sell thousands of copies is under way around the world. Interest in the selection of Mandela's speeches and writings is running high as momentous events unfold in South Africa and Mandela gives voice to the anti-apartheid struggle.

Fifteen copies were sold at celebrations in Atlanta, 7 in Detroit, 17 in Pittsburgh, and 7 in Miami.

Supporters are selling the book on the job, at plant-gates, and on college campuses.

"There is no better way to understand what drives this immense fight in South Africa today, and what Nelson Mandela stands for, than to read *The Struggle Is My Life*," said Pathfinder's director Steve Clark in a press release.

Join the campaign and order your bundle today!

## Order your bundle today . . .

Send me ☐ 5 ☐ 10 ☐ 15 ☐ 20 (other) copies of:

☐ *The Struggle Is My Life* (\$10.95 each; \$7.25 each for 10 or more).

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## Fidel Castro speech, Eastern strike news in next 'Militant'

Our next issue will be a special 24-page edition that will carry the text of Cuban President Fidel Castro's speech to the closing session of the 16th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions on January 28.

Also included will be expanded coverage of the International Association of Machinists strike against Eastern Airlines, a report on the results of the Nicaraguan elections from our Managua bureau, and the first articles from correspondents Seth Galinsky and Selva Nebbia who are currently in El Salvador. From El Salvador they will be going to Panama.



# British engineering workers, miners back fight

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving a 25-year prison term in the state penitentiary in Anamosa on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international campaign to fight for justice for

port for the Curtis defense campaign. The video was produced by Hollywood director Nick Castle.

Fifteen members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union attended a lunchtime showing February 17. Mick Williams, the AEU convenor at GKN Laycock Engineering, brought the endorsement of the Joint

of the National Union of Mineworkers, attended a February 18 lunchtime video showing in Murton, a mining village in County Durham. Bill Etherington of the National Justice for Mineworkers Campaign explained that his group had considered information slandering Curtis and his defense campaign peddled by an antilabor outfit in the United States known as the Workers League, but had rejected it and reaffirmed their support for Curtis. The justice campaign was established to support miners who were fired and imprisoned during the 1984-85 miners' strike in Britain.

In the discussion that followed the video, participants decided to organize a major fund-raising event to meet the costs of an upcoming tour of Britain by Kate Kaku, a leader of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

Gerry Conroy of the Southeast Center for Justice in Atlanta sent the

following message to a January 27 rally for Curtis' defense campaign:

"I consider Mark Curtis to be one of the foremost political prisoners in our country today. His case cries out for a great wrong to be undone.

"I personally knew Mark. . . . We worked together [in Birmingham, Alabama] to form a student organization that would oppose U.S. imperialist actions in Central America. I remember Mark as a clear, dedicated, and tireless worker. What motivated him, I believe, was to struggle in solidarity with oppressed people that the whole world may live in human dignity and equally participate in human rights due every person.

"I urge you to stand strong in your defense of Mark and to commit yourselves to bringing this great wrong to the awareness of the people of our country."

In January Ruth Gray, the national

secretary of the Young Socialists of New Zealand, sent a message to Curtis following the group's founding meeting in Hamilton. Gray pledged that the organization's activists would make circulating the International Youth Appeal initiated by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee their "number one task."

"We want to join with thousands of young people around the world who have been won to supporting your defense campaign," Gray wrote. "We are confident that we can win many more young fighters to this effort. Young people who are fighting for justice and democratic rights will want to be part of winning your struggle for freedom."

Gray concluded her message saying, "Your victory will be our victory also."

Pamela Holmes from Sheffield, England, contributed to this week's column.

## DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

Curtis. For more information about the case or how you can help, write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311; telephone (515) 246-1695.

If you have news or reports on activities in support of Mark Curtis from your city or country, please send them to the *Militant*.

Two meetings featuring the video *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* in Sheffield, England, won new sup-

port for the Curtis defense campaign. The video was produced by Hollywood director Nick Castle.

During a discussion following the video, Williams explained the recent victimization of union activists in the engineering industry in Sheffield. The effort by Iowa prison authorities to frame Curtis on gambling charges was also discussed and those in attendance responded to a call that protests be sent to prison officials.

Twenty people, mostly members

# Warden sticks Curtis with gambling frame-up

BY SANDRA NELSON

DES MOINES, Iowa — Political activist Mark Curtis was denied his appeal February 15 on frame-up gambling charges by Assistant Warden John Sissel at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa. Curtis is appealing the decision to the state Department of Corrections.

On February 1 prison authorities found Curtis guilty of gambling on the Super Bowl football game. The charges rest on the testimony of a prison guard who said he saw Curtis drop a piece of paper with the words "Super Bowl" written on it. Curtis has maintained that he did not gamble and that the charges were politically motivated. Other inmates testified on his behalf. However, the finding of guilty was upheld.

Curtis is serving a 25-year sentence on a frame-up rape and burglary conviction.

### After victory was won

The gambling charges were issued just one day after the Martin Luther King, Jr., Organization, an inmates' group, had won an important victory in a year-long effort to make a dozen political books, including titles by Nelson Mandela and Malcolm X, available to prisoners. Curtis was recently re-elected secretary of the MLK Jr. Organization.

In a letter to his defense committee, Curtis wrote that, with the denial of his first appeal, "I was transferred immediately to Level 3. . . . A friend of mine helped me move all my things, and I'm settled in a cell on the fourth galley. I had to turn in my radio and tape player." No phone calls are allowed and his visiting rights are now reduced, Curtis reported. He had been housed on Level 5 where prisoners are allowed more privileges.

### Weekend lock-up

Curtis has also begun serving two weekend lock-ups. "All the 'weekenders' will have to remain in our cells except to be escorted to the chow hall for meals, and a daily shower," he wrote. "It lasts from Friday night until Monday morning."

Curtis described the overcrowded conditions in the cell house he was moved to. "The cell house has been doubled up quite a bit since I was here last summer. Most of the first, second, and third galleys have bunk beds now. I saw a couple of guys in a cell on the ground floor who are in Level 2 and locked up after 5:30 p.m. The shelves have been taken out and they are very crowded. One guy was sleeping in his bottom bunk, while the other was sitting on the edge of the same bed, writing a letter on their only desk."

Curtis will also have two good-conduct days removed from his record, lengthening his sentence. He is denied his typewriter and has been removed from his elected position as secretary of the MLK Jr. Organization.

Just before the penalties were imposed, "we held a MLK Jr. meeting," Curtis wrote. "It was attended by 60 men, a new record for a business meeting. Many came because we

were expecting to have a video, *Bill Cosby on Prejudice*." The video didn't arrive, he explained. "We had a good discussion however, and I was asked to speak on Nelson Mandela. I read from his recent statements. I asked for a standing ovation for Mandela, and we gave him an enthusiastic one.

"I also gave an explanation as to why I was not able to be secretary now, because of the action by the administration, and said I was still very much fighting it, and would do whatever I could for the organization," Curtis wrote.

"Several guys have told me they are angry

about the warden's decision and were surprised at the decision and how long it took for them to reach a decision. One guy tonight told me that they are 'scandalous' the way they lie. He just got off third floor for fighting, when in fact it was just horseplay with a friend."

Curtis wrote to let his supporters know "that this denial has made me angry(er), but not upset. I plan on doing everything I can to work around the new obstacles. In fact, there is a new crowd for me to talk with, and it includes many old friends as well."

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has

## Curtis youth appeal circulated around world

BY ELIZABETH KEALY AND HEATHER RANDLE

Many young activists and their organizations learned of Mark Curtis' fight for justice through a recent four-week tour of the South by Kate Kaku, a leader of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee and Curtis' wife.

Through the tour an International Youth Appeal for Justice for Mark Curtis was circulated and received support. The appeal is part of an effort by Curtis' defense committee to involve young people in the defense campaign.

Campus meetings were held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Young supporters of Curtis' defense effort participated in many of these events. Bobby Singleton, a young civil rights activist in Alabama, became a signer of the youth appeal during Kaku's tour.

Singleton was himself a frame-up victim because of his efforts to register Blacks to vote. He was sentenced to serve 90 days in jail and was heavily fined. During a campaign in the early 1980s to support workers organizing a union at a catfish processing plant in Alabama, Singleton worked with Curtis, a former resident of Birmingham.

### Central campaign

The Young Socialist Alliance, an organization of students and young workers in the United States, has made circulating the youth appeal a central campaign and is encouraging others to join the effort. A February 10-11 meeting of the group's National Committee discussed the receptivity among young people to Curtis' fight and the support already won.

YSA chapters from around the country are reporting important progress. In Minneapolis, Chris Nisan, the political coordinator of the Africana Student Cultural Center, and Jeff Meisner from the Palestine Solidarity Committee and the Progressive Student Organization at the University of Minnesota have signed the appeal.

In San Francisco a representative of the League of Filipino Students who is on tour in the United States added his name to the appeal. He took copies, along with other

materials, to publicize Curtis' case while he's touring and when he returns to the Philippines.

Members of the Young Socialists, the YSA's sister organization in Canada, are also actively circulating the youth appeal on behalf of Curtis. Through their efforts new endorsers now include Cory Ollikka, the youth president of the National Farmers Union; Sanites Casimar of the Haitian Literacy Project; and Aias Perez Aleman, the

deputy chair of the Canadian Federation of Students. In Iceland the Group Against South African Apartheid has become an endorser and is helping to introduce Curtis' case to others. The youth appeal is now being circulated in several countries and in several languages — French, English, Spanish, Icelandic, and Norwegian. For a copy of the appeal write to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

Please send a copy and any response received from Iowa prison officials to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

## Campaign for justice for Domingo and Viernes celebrates victory

BY STUART CROME

SEATTLE — Some 200 people attended a victory celebration here January 20 sponsored by the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes following the committee's second legal victory.

A federal judge here found Constantine "Tony" Baruso and Leonilo Malabed liable in the murders of Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes, two Filipino unionists who had opposed the dictatorship of the late Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos. The ruling came four weeks after a federal jury found the Marcos estate and Marcos' widow Imelda liable for the murders and awarded the victims' families \$15.1 million.

Domingo and Viernes were officials of Cannery Workers Local 37 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union in Seattle. They were murdered in 1981 a month after they had successfully introduced a resolution at an ILWU convention condemning trade union repression in the Philippines and calling for an investigative team to visit that country.

"This victory says no dictatorship can perpetrate crimes of violence and still get away with it," said Mike Lowery, a former U.S. senator from Washington State. A message of congratulations from a representative of Seattle Mayor Norman Rice was read.

"Ours is not just a legal victory," said Cindy Domingo, Silme's sister and a leader

of the Committee for Justice. "We continued the work that Silme and Gene started in the union. The fact that the union still exists is one of our finest accomplishments." Forging unity among people of various nationalities during the defense effort was a second important achievement, she said.

U.S. District Judge Barbara Rothstein ruled January 13 that the families of Domingo and Viernes had produced "clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that the Marcoses created and controlled an intelligence operation which plotted the murders" of the two union activists. She also concluded that the corporation controlled by Malabed, a doctor and longtime friend of the Marcoses, provided funds that were "paid to Baruso and used to perpetrate the murders."

The judge awarded \$6.7 million to Domingo's wife and two children and \$1.7 million to Viernes' sister and other survivors. The court's findings have been presented to King County prosecutor Norman Maleng who is expected to decide in March whether criminal charges should be brought against Baruso and Malabed.

"Our most urgent task is to put Tony Baruso on trial," said Cindy Domingo, outlining the committee's next steps. Another effort of the committee will be to fight an appeal of the federal jury's ruling in the case by the Marcos family. Attorneys representing the Marcos estate plan to appeal the ruling on grounds of "head-of-state immunity."



# UN human rights officer assigned to monitor Curtis case

GENEVA, Switzerland — On February 14 Kate Kaku and John Studer, leaders of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, met with Maria Francisca Ize-Charrin, a United Nations human rights officer, to discuss UN involvement in the campaign to free Mark Curtis.

Ize-Charrin was assigned by UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and Jan Martenson, director of the UN's Centre for Human Rights in Geneva, to direct the UN inquiry into Curtis' case. The action followed a February 1 appeal sent here by Curtis that asked the world body to review and act on the abuses of human rights in his frame-up, conviction, and harassment by authorities in prison.

Curtis, a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, is serving a 25-year jail term on a frame-up rape and burglary con-

viction. He is incarcerated at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory in Anamosa.

An international delegation of Curtis supporters from the United States, Canada, Sweden, Britain, and France arrived here February 6 to press Curtis' fight for justice before the 46th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, which began January 29. Kaku, who is Curtis' wife, and Studer, the coordinator of Curtis' international defense effort, headed the delegation.

The commission is composed of delegates from 43 countries, along with observers from more than 80 other countries and from national liberation movements and international human rights organizations, referred to as nongovernmental organizations or NGOs.

## Summary of Curtis case to be prepared

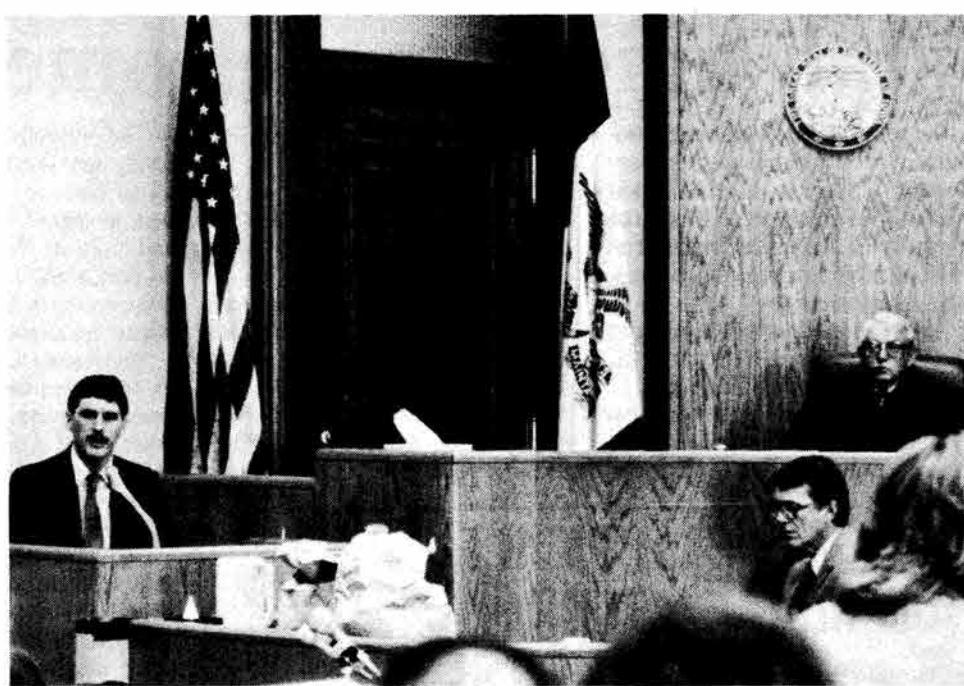
After reviewing the dossier submitted by Curtis, Ize-Charrin told Kaku and Studer that she will prepare a summary of the case and allegations that Curtis' rights were violated by Des Moines authorities. The Centre for Human Rights will then send this summary to the U.S. embassy with a formal request for a reply. The summary will also be published in a bulletin and circulated to all member nations of the Commission on Human Rights.

Any further developments in Curtis' case, Ize-Charrin said, should be reported to her office, for similar summary, publication, and inquiry to the U.S. government. The Centre would particularly be concerned with any new efforts by prison authorities to curtail Curtis' rights in prison or to victimize him, she said.

## U.S. obstruction of human rights work

Without direct action by the commission itself, the Centre cannot press an investigation into Curtis' case further at this time. Since its founding in 1946, the UN commission has never authorized an investigation of systematic human rights abuses in the United States.

In 1976 a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly went into effect which allows the UN "to receive and consider ...



Militant/Yvonne Hayes  
Mark Curtis testifying at his 1988 frame-up trial in Des Moines, Iowa. He has appealed to the UN to review his case because of the violation of his rights by the police, court, and prison authorities.



Militant/Arthur Hughes  
John Studer, coordinator of the Curtis defense committee.

## 'Great response' to \$20,000 fund for Curtis' UN effort

BY PRISCILLA SCHENK

DES MOINES, Iowa — A special effort by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee to raise \$20,000 is receiving a "great response," according to defense committee leader Sandra Nelson. The funds are financing an international delegation of Curtis' supporters who have been in Geneva, Switzerland, launching a campaign to bring Curtis' fight for justice before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

"So far more than \$19,700 has been pledged toward our goal," Nelson said. More than \$8,600 has already been paid and the defense committee projects rapidly collecting the remainder to pay off the bills incurred during the Geneva trip.

"The money," Nelson said, "has come from many places around the country from long-time supporters of civil liberties; from many Curtis supporters in Iowa; from a Black rights activist in Waterloo, Iowa; from an oil worker in Salt Lake City; from two workers in Pittsburgh who just got a bonus check; from members of Curtis' family; from a retired professor in Ames, Iowa; and from Canadian supporters."

"What makes raising this amount possible," Nelson explained, "is the appeal of this bold initiative in bringing the fight for justice for Curtis into an international arena. It was not a special technique or fundraising skill, but what was happening in Geneva, that would convince people to be part of this effort by contributing as much as they could."

Fundraising calls turned out to be helpful beyond raising money, a Curtis supporter and volunteer from St. Louis said. "We also realized that this effort was a way to win new support for Curtis and to broaden and deepen the support we have won over the past two years."

Among those contributing to the defense effort for the first time was a student from Denver, who also decided to get a copy of the video *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis* and show it to people he knows. An activist in Des Moines, who made a sizable contribution, is helping circulate a petition protesting the recent victimization of Curtis by prison authorities for his political activities in prison.

The number of phone calls to interested individuals required a big effort. The defense committee put out a call for volunteers. Several supporters from Milwaukee and St. Louis volunteered on a full-time basis for a week or two to organize the campaign, defense committee leader Hazel Zimmerman reported.

"We organized our calling in teams of two. While one person makes the call, the second person follows up their call with a thank-you letter and a packet of information, including a copy of the letter that Curtis wrote to the United Nations about his case," Zimmerman said. Similar efforts were also organized in Los Angeles and New York.

In addition to the urgent appeal for funds to finance the UN delegation, the Mark Curtis Defense Committee "has adopted an operating budget of \$60,000 from now until May," Nelson said. "Our successes in raising the funds for the Geneva effort put us in a strong position to broaden our base of support and involve supporters across the country and around the world in meeting this goal over the next few months."

Contributions for the UN project are still urgently needed. Donations should be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311 and earmarked for the UN effort. Tax deductible contributions can be made payable to the Political Rights Defense Fund, Inc.

communications from individuals claiming to be victims of violations of any of the rights set forth in the Covenant." For the last 14 years, the U.S. government has refused to sign this international agreement, effectively barring UN human rights officers from taking further action in cases involving individuals from the United States.

Ize-Charrin told Kaku and Studer about an additional avenue the Centre can take to pursue Curtis' fight for justice. The Commission on Human Rights has established a special rapporteur, or reporter, on torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment. Because of Curtis' savage beating at the hands of Des Moines police when he was arrested on March 4, 1988, Ize-Charrin suggested Curtis supporters bring his case to the special rapporteur.

Studer and Kaku also met with Alfred de Zayas, an official of the Centre's communications department, which monitors allegations of systematic repression and patterns of violation of human rights in countries. De Zayas opened a file on Curtis' case.

Despite obstacles put in the way by the U.S. government, numerous examples of violations of basic political rights in the United States have been brought before the commission. For 14 years the International Indian Treaty Council has raised the case of imprisoned Native American activist Leonard Peltier, as well as numerous other cases of activists harassed or jailed for their work on behalf of Native American rights.

So far, at this year's session, Curtis' case was raised by Ramón Custodio López, president of the Central America Commission on Human Rights, and other delegates have raised the cases of Black rights activist Gerónimo Pratt, Irish refugee Joseph Doherty, and Puerto Rican independence fighters Filiberto Ojeda Ríos and the Hartford 15. The session is scheduled to conclude March 9.

## Carthan joins delegation

Eddie Carthan, the first Black mayor of Tchula, Mississippi, joined the Curtis defense delegation here on February 15. He was adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International after being framed up and jailed by racist authorities on murder charges in the early 1980s. He was freed after serving 18 months in prison following an international defense campaign.

Carthan helped the delegation set meetings with human rights proponents who had helped win his fight. The Rev. Canon Kenith A. David of the Urban Rural Mission of the World Council of Churches, who met with Carthan, Kaku, and Studer, became an endorser of Curtis' defense committee.

The delegation met other leaders of the World Council of Churches during a reception for commission delegates held by the Council at its international headquarters. Following the reception, delegation members met with Victoria Berry of the council's International Affairs and Human Rights Department, the group's delegate to the UN session.

Delegation members also met with Mark Thomson, a delegate and staff member of the World University Service based here. Prior to joining the organization, Thomson was a leader of the movement in solidarity with the people of Central America in Britain. Thomson endorsed and made a donation to the defense campaign.

A highlight of the delegation's work was

a meeting with Zola Skweyiya, the delegate of the African National Congress of South Africa to the commission. Skweyiya is director of legal and constitutional affairs for the ANC in Lusaka, Zambia. Skweyiya expressed his support for the effort to bring Curtis' case before the world forum in Geneva and endorsed the defense committee.

Curtis' case was presented to several other accredited national liberation organizations and member state delegations, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, Sweden, Cuba, and Nicaragua.

Kaku was able to address the weekly meeting of the delegates of the NGOs on February 14. Following the meeting she was introduced to Sonia Cuentas Anci, the wife of Javier Antonio Alarcón Guzmán, a Peruvian trade union leader who was disappeared last December. The two women embraced and saluted each other's efforts in the fight to win justice for their husbands and in speaking out against human rights abuses in their countries.

Kaku and Carthan were interviewed by *Trouw*, a newspaper from the Netherlands.

The delegation wound up its work in Geneva on February 20.

"We have made a powerful beginning," Kaku said. "Mark's fight for freedom has been formally brought before the UN. The Centre for Human Rights is bringing it to the attention of all the nations in the commission. It was raised in the commission session."

"We have won important new support and many new friends. We have embarked on a long-term effort to win review and action in the case by the Commission on Human Rights. We are now in a much stronger position to advance this fight."

Kaku left Geneva for Paris where she begins a two-month tour of Europe. Supporters are organizing public meetings, fund-raising events, media interviews, and appointments with political leaders in Britain, Sweden, Iceland, Denmark, and France.

## United Nations rights commission condemns invasion of Panama

GENEVA, Switzerland — After a behind-the-scenes fight, which began when its session opened, and a heated public debate, the Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution February 20 condemning the U.S. invasion of Panama.

The resolution was originally submitted by the delegations of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Syria. By the time of the vote, it had been reworded with far broader support.

To counter the resolution, the U.S. delegation promoted a series of amendments that would have destroyed its political focus. The delegates of the new Panamanian regime installed by the U.S. invasion submitted a resolution attempting to shift the focus onto Cuba and Nicaragua.

When it became clear in the commission debate that these moves were being isolated, they were withdrawn before they could be voted down.

Thus, the UN Commission on Human Rights became the latest in a series of international bodies to condemn the U.S. violation of Panamanian sovereignty and the death, destruction, and violation of human rights the invasion caused.



# Utah unionists welcome striker's first-time visit

Some 8,500 International Association of Machinists members struck Eastern Airlines last March 4 in an effort to block the company's drive to break the union and impose massive concessions on workers.

As of the *Militant's* closing news date, Wednesday, February 21, the strike was in its 355th day.

The Machinists' walkout remains solid and has gained new momentum. Meanwhile, Eastern

in Salt Lake City to mark the strike's first anniversary.

In addition to the CWA, Croft has already spoken to three OCAW locals and Machinists Local 568. He also met with many other union officials and attended two receptions held for him. Close to \$1,000 has been contributed so far for the strikers' fund.

A highlight of the first leg of the tour was the USWA Local 8319 meeting. Most production workers

The Virginia State AFL-CIO recently sent out a letter encouraging all affiliates to organize their members to attend the March 3 picket and rally at Washington National Airport, along with the strike benefit that evening in Alexandria, Virginia, where the airport is located.

"Individual local unions are urged to form 'caravans'—similar to those that went to the United Mine Workers of America's Camp Solidarity last November—to travel to Alexandria. We also urge you to begin collecting funds to bring to the event... Like the Mine Workers and Communications Workers struggles last year, the Machinists strike has become a cause for every union member in every state in the nation," the letter stresses.

Strikers from IAM Local 796 at National Airport have spoken to meetings of operating engineers, carpenters, and electrical workers recently to build the March 3 events. Dozens of union locals and strike supporters have taken tickets for the benefit.

Unions, restaurants, food co-ops, and organizations in Washington, D.C., northern Virginia, and Maryland are donating food and money to the strike benefit. The main speaker at the event will be IAM International President George Kourpias.

Local 796 members have also joined celebrations of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela's release in South Africa. On February 17 strikers participated in a picket line and rally of more than 300 at the South African embassy in Washington.

"The only thing that has made strikers more excited and more confident of our victory over Frank Lorenzo's crumbling empire is that our brother Nelson Mandela has won his freedom and that the ANC and other organizations have been unbanned. Lorenzo's empire will end up in the same grave that is being dug for apartheid," striker Susie Winsten told the cheering rally.

IAM Local 796 voted to join the Nelson Mandela Reception Com-

mittee (U.S.) at its February 14 meeting.

Richard Lefteris, president and strike coordinator of Eastern IAM Local 641 in Greensboro, North Carolina, and retired IAM Grand Lodge representative Bill Schenk visited Camp Solidarity in southwest Virginia February 15. They invited miners on strike against Pittston Coal to participate in the March 4 solidarity action at the Greensboro airport. "When we get through with Pittston, we're going to help you guys get Lorenzo," miners told the Eastern strikers. Miners are planning to attend the March 3-4 anniversary events in Chicago, New York, Detroit, and other cities.

three years, and telephone workers who won their battle last year against NYNEX are all planning to attend the Boston strikers' rally at Logan International Airport March 4. Workers at ADT Alarm Systems, who have been on strike for five weeks around New England, will also be there.

Many locals in New England have been inviting speakers from IAM Local 1726 to their meetings. A letter from Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Arthur Osborne has gone out to all union affiliates in the state, urging them to invite strikers to their next union meeting, to raise money, or organize food drives for the strikers, and to mobilize for March 4.

*Striking Eastern Machinists Nancy Brown from Alexandria, Virginia, and Maggie Pucci from Boston contributed to this column, along with Ellie Garcia from Salt Lake City, and Rich Stuart from Greensboro.*



Militant/Jay Ressler  
Los Angeles strike leader Eddie Croft's visit in the Salt Lake City area included an engagement at the University of Utah.

## SUPPORT EASTERN STRIKERS!

chief Frank Lorenzo's plan to rebuild as a nonunion carrier is faltering, hammered by blows from the strike and stepped-up competition in the airlines industry.

The Eastern workers' fight has won broad support from working people in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, Canada, Sweden, and elsewhere in the world. Readers—especially Eastern strikers—are encouraged to send news of strike solidarity activities to this column.

Striking Eastern Machinist Eddie Croft from IAM Local 1932's strike committee at Los Angeles International Airport is getting a warm reception on his two-week tour of Utah—the first time an Eastern striker has visited that state.

Croft was invited to Utah by Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 2-591 and United Steelworkers of America Local 8319 in the Salt Lake City area. Local 8319 paid for Croft's airfare and formed a committee to build the tour; other unionists are also helping out.

Croft spoke to the Communications Workers of America's governing board and was introduced by the CWA vice-president to Ed Mayne, director of the state AFL-CIO. Mayne pledged support for an action

in this local work 12-hour shifts, with three days on and three days off. They work for Magcorp, a major industrial polluter, gleaming magnesium from the Great Salt Lake. Many are getting fed up with the work conditions and company's attitude.

When Croft spoke he was repeatedly interrupted by yells of "Right on!" and by chants and clapping. The end of his remarks was met with strong applause and commitments to help on the anniversary action. One local member said he had never in his life attended such a union meeting.

Croft also met with Lenoris Bush, a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People executive board member.

The striker spoke to 30 people at a University of Utah meeting. The parents of two of the students at the meeting work at Eastern's reservation center in Salt Lake City, which employs 600 and is nonunion. This led to a lively discussion about the strike.

"People like Eddie Croft are keeping the hope alive," was the headline of an article about the striker's visit in the *Daily Utah Chronicle*.

# TWA's Icahn demands millions in new concessions

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEW YORK — Faced with mounting financial losses, Carl Icahn, chairman of Trans World Airlines, is demanding millions in new concessions from pilots, Machinists union members, and flight attendants at the airline.

Icahn has asked the Air Line Pilots Association at TWA to reopen their contract, which does not expire until 1992, and agree to a 10 percent wage cut—some \$80 million a year. There are 3,500 pilots at TWA.

Icahn is demanding an additional \$40 million in concessions from the ramp workers, mechanics, store clerks, dining unit employees, and other workers organized by the International Association of Machinists (IAM),

and from the flight attendants, who are members of the International Federation of Flight Attendants (IFFA).

TWA, the sixth largest U.S. carrier, is expected to post a loss for 1989 of \$150 million. The airline has \$2.7 billion in long-term debt, resulting in interest costs of \$392 million a year.

To get cash, Icahn has been selling some of the airline's assets. Recently, he sold TWA's Chicago-London route and a Chicago maintenance facility to American Airlines for \$195 million. He also sold 11 jumbo jets and then leased them back.

The airline is "at a crossroads," Icahn told the *New York Times*. "Do we survive as a

small airline or do we grow? It's up to the unions to decide which road to take."

In a Dec. 18, 1989, letter to all employees, Icahn sounded a similar note. "It is clear that the union leadership must examine traditional work rules which make little social or economic sense. By their very nature, these 'sacred cows' seek to undermine productivity and thereby increase costs," Icahn argued. "If we hope to invest and succeed, there is another ingredient necessary. Management and labor must work together and not as antagonists. Antagonism will only tear the airline apart just as it did at Eastern."

## 1986 concessions

In 1986, shortly after Icahn took over the airline, IAM members at TWA approved a three-year contract that included a \$2-an-hour across-the-board wage cut and a two-tier wage scale for new employees. The wage cut was restored in January 1989 for all employees hired before Dec. 31, 1985.

ALPA members also approved \$500 million in concessions in 1986.

Flight attendants, however, refused to accept Icahn's demands for concessions and went on strike for 10 weeks. Flight attendants hired to help break the strike remained on the job after the IFFA ended the walkout. Strikers were put on a recall list, and it was only in January of this year that all the remaining strikers were able to get back to work. They are now working under the contract imposed by Icahn in 1986, which includes a 44 percent wage cut and work-rule concessions.

## Icahn 'a vulture'

The IAM's contract expired Dec. 31, 1988; union members have been working since then under the terms of the old contract. Negotiations between the IAM and TWA on a new

contract continue, although talks have broken down many times during the past 13 months.

Officials from the pilots' association, Machinists union, and IFFA have stated their opposition to more concessions, which have totaled \$1.3 billion over the last four years. "I think he's after \$80 billion and that's all," said Herb Johnson, president of IAM Local 1650 in Kansas City, in an Associated Press interview. "I think he is a vulture, and he's going to suck every dollar from the airline before he sells the carcass in whole or in parts."

At the same time, IAM officials are also trying to find a buyer for TWA and have opened talks with other carriers to explore the possibility of a buyout.

Many IAM members at TWA, recognizing that a victory for the Machinists at Eastern Airlines will help them resist Icahn's attacks are active in the Eastern strike.

Members of IAM Local 1056, which represents TWA Machinists at Kennedy and La Guardia airports in New York, have raised more than \$13,500 for the Eastern strikers since the walkout began a year ago. Eastern strikers have also spoken at a majority of Local 1056's union meetings since the walkout began, and TWA Machinists have joined strikers' picket lines, rallies, and other activities.

Many Local 1056 members wear the "No Lorenzo" buttons on their work jackets. Plans are under way to fill two buses with TWA workers for the Eastern strikers' March 4 rally at La Guardia Airport celebrating the year's anniversary of the strike.

*Nancy Rosenstock is a member of IAM Local 1056 and works on the ramp at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.*

# Australia pilots face huge fines

BY KATE BLAKENEY

SYDNEY, Australia — Four domestic Australian airlines are attempting to force the Australian Federation of Air Pilots to pay damages after a record \$6.5 million (US\$4.95 million) judgment against the federation was handed down February 12 by the supreme court of the state of Victoria. The pilots' federation was also ordered to pay the airlines' legal costs, put at \$2 million (US\$1.5 million).

The judgment against the pilots followed last November's court ruling that the federation had conspired to injure the airlines and was liable to pay damages.

The airlines had instituted the legal action after the pilots—who went on strike last August to fight for a substantial pay increase—refused to return to work.

Pressure against the airlines not to collect the damages is being brought by the federal Labor government of Prime Minister Robert

Hawke and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU).

John Halfpenny, Victorian Trades Hall Council secretary, said the union movement should consider mounting a campaign to insure that the airline companies do not collect the damages.

The federal government's minister for transport and communications also warned of renewed industrial disruption if the airlines try to recover damages from the pilots' federation and called on the airlines to desist.

Pilots' federation President Brian McCarthy said the organization could not afford to pay the damages even if it sold its six-story headquarters in Melbourne. The federation has 1,640 members.

While the pilots remain on strike against the four airlines, the carriers have been able to substantially rebuild their flight schedules by hiring scab pilots, many from outside Australia.



# Garment unionists swell Eastern strike picket in New York

BY SUSAN LaMONT

NEW YORK — The area in front of Eastern Airlines' entrances at New York's La Guardia Airport was packed February 17, as 150 Eastern strikers and supporters crowded behind the metal barricades surrounding the area where they are allowed to picket. They were gathered for the second in a biweekly series of solidarity pickets, organized by striking International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1018.

The Machinists strike has picked up steam in recent weeks and — with the year's anniversary of the walkout rapidly approaching — the spirit on the picket line was militant and confident.

The loudest chant — "On strike! On strike! On strike!" — was mixed with cries of "Don't fly Eastern!" and "Shame!" directed at Eastern passengers who hurried through the terminal doors.

Members of a dozen unions were there, along with Machinists who work at Kennedy International Airport and Eastern strikers from Boston, Newark, and Philadelphia. Several Eastern flight attendants who had been part of the strike until the Transport Workers Union called off their sympathy strike were also there, out of uniform.

Shortly after noon, a bus pulled up in front of the crowd and a roar of cheers went up as 30 members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) poured out to join the protest.

The cops began to get itchy as the picket line got larger and louder, so strikers decided to spread out by dispatching some people to Continental Airlines and downstairs to Eastern's arrivals area.

At a brief rally held before the pickets divided up, May Chen, assistant education director for ILGWU Local 23-25, spoke to the crowd in both Chinese and English. "It's hard to be on strike for a year," she told the cheering strikers. "But we'll be here as long as you are."

Another ILGWU official spoke in Spanish. They were introduced by Kitty Krupat, international educational director of the ILGWU.

## Eastern strike leaflet in Chinese

Many of the ILGWU members who came to back the Eastern strikers were Chinese and Latino. For most, this was their first visit to the picket line. Some had heard about the Machinists' fight through Local 1018 members who had set up a table in the ILGWU union hall and spoke at English classes it organizes. Some of those who came on the ILGWU bus were students in those classes. There is also a bulletin board with information about the Eastern strike at the ILGWU hall.

The garment unionists carried picket signs in Chinese — "Solidarity with the Eastern strike" and "Boycott Eastern and Continental," they read. Others were in Spanish.

In an effort to widen support for the strike among other unionists, Local 1018 has issued

## Racist cross-burning triggers protests in Kentucky

BY BRONSON ROZIER

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A cross-burning in the yard of Daryl and Jeanette Toatley, who recently moved into an all-white area of town, has been met with a week of protest marches and community meetings here. Two neighbors have been charged with violating the Toatley's civil rights.

Several people from the community have joined the antiracist protests. Others say the marches are "just stirring up trouble."

Anne Braden, a longtime civil rights leader, spoke to 150 people at a February 4 meeting. "Our ranks are growing," she said. The days of the power of racism are numbered, "from South Africa to Louisville." The Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression and Ministries United of South Central Louisville helped organize the event.

a bilingual strike information leaflet in English and Spanish, and recently — with the ILGWU's help in translation — printed one in Chinese.

Teresa Hasing, a union member born in Ecuador, said many ILGWU members know about the Eastern strike. "We want to defend the strikers and defeat Lorenzo," she stressed. Several garment unionists explained the problem created by Eastern's relatively cheap fares. Some have family members who have flown Eastern to Latin America because it seems to be the only way to afford a visit to faraway relatives. And for some Latin American destinations, Eastern's flights are also the most direct.

## T-shirts in terminal

While picketing continued outside, small groups of Machinists walked through the terminal wearing new strike anniversary T-shirts recently put out by IAM Local 1776 in Philadelphia.

This caused quite a stir inside the terminal. At one point, the cops tried — unsuccessfully — to keep T-shirted strikers outside Continental Airlines' ticket area. Passing through the terminal, strikers caught the eye of passengers and other airline workers. "Who are those people?" a group of tourists asked their tour guide, who told them about the strike. Several workers at Hudson General — a subcontracting company that does work for Eastern — greeted the strikers and told them about several Hudson workers who had refused to service Eastern planes.

Local 1018 members told the unionists who came out to the picket line how important solidarity was in a long fight. "I feel more like we're going to win the strike because you're here today," said striker Angel Garcia, as he thanked people for coming.

## AFL-CIO backs March 4

In the past several weeks, two dozen Local 1018 strikers have fanned out to speak at



Militant/Susan LaMont

The February 17 picket line at La Guardia Airport, held to back Eastern strikers, drew 30 garment workers, many of whom were Chinese and Latino, and other unionists. Strikers have put out literature about their fight in English, Spanish, and Chinese.

union meetings and other events to build the anniversary action set for 12 noon, March 4, near the Continental hangar at La Guardia. Strikers were also on hand at the big New York meeting — as they were at similar events in Montréal, Atlanta, and other cities — held on February 16 to "welcome home" Nelson Mandela.

Fifteen buses have already been reserved by unions to bring members to the March 4 rally, which striking Eastern IAM locals at Newark and Kennedy airports are also building.

Similar momentum is gathering around the country for the anniversary rallies, walk-throughs, pickets, benefits, and other activities that have been called in at least 20 cities to celebrate the year-long fight at Eastern.

On February 13, Richard Wilson, director of the AFL-CIO's Department of Organization and Field Services, sent out a memorandum to all AFL-CIO affiliates, the IAM's strike bulletin reported. "On March 4," Wil-

son said, "the IAM is planning events to demonstrate their resolve at Eastern, which has not diminished and in fact has grown stronger. If you are contacted by the IAM, please do everything in your ability to assist in their activity. . . . Let's make March 4, 1990, a day Frank Lorenzo won't forget."

Meanwhile, Eastern failed to meet a February 20 deadline for reaching agreement with its creditors on a reorganization plan that would be acceptable to them to get the airline out of bankruptcy. In addition, the federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. and U.S. Department of Labor are raising concerns over Eastern's ability to meet its pension liabilities, estimated by the PBGC to be as high as \$980 million.

Also on February 20, AFL-CIO officials meeting in Bal Harbour, Florida, questioned U.S. Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole about a reported \$120 million federal contract awarded to Eastern to transport government and military personnel. Dole said she was unaware of the contract.

# Machinists protest Air Canada plan

BY HEIDI ROSE AND JOHN STEELE

On February 14 workers at Air Canada in Montréal and Toronto demonstrated against company plans to contract out almost 500 commissary and food truck jobs to CARA, a food services company. The demonstrations were called by the International Association of Machinists (IAM), which represents 9,500 mechanics, ramp workers, cleaners, and commissary and other workers at Air Canada.

The IAM sees the contracting out as an attempt to weaken the union at a time when contract talks will soon begin. The present agreement expires on June 24.

While CARA workers are unionized in both Montréal and Toronto, they receive less pay than food services workers at Air Canada. In addition to lowering labor costs, Air Canada is seeking to further divide its work force, with separate union contracts for different departments. This would create a situation where the food service could continue to operate if IAM members were to strike.

In Montréal, 250 workers marched to the Dorval airport terminal chanting "No contracting out" and slogans denouncing Pierre Jeannot, president of Air Canada. As the demonstration neared the Eastern Airlines ticket counter, where a dozen strikers were picketing, chants began against Frank Lorenzo, chairman of Texas Air Corp. that owns Eastern Airlines.

At a rally at the end of the demonstration, a message from Québec Federation of Labor (FTQ) President Louis Laberge was read. It gave "unconditional support" to the fight against contracting out. IAM Vice-president Val Bourgeois welcomed the demonstrators — "particularly our members from Eastern Airlines" — and called contracting out an old tactic from the "bag of tricks of management."

Martial Jasmin, Eastern strike coordinator at Dorval, received a rousing hand from the

crowd when he spoke.

"We have been on strike for almost a year," Jasmin said. "We support what you are doing 100 percent. Don't let Pierre Jeannot become another Lorenzo." At the regular meeting of the FTQ Montréal Labor Council the night before, the delegate from IAM Local 1751, which represents the Eastern strikers and the Machinists at Air Canada, told delegates there would be an action at the Dorval airport March 4, the anniversary of the Eastern strike.

In Toronto 200 demonstrators rallied and marched twice through Terminal 2, which Air Canada uses. They chanted "Save our jobs" and handed out leaflets appealing for passen-

ger support.

Toronto Air Canada Local 2323 President Bill Shipman spoke to the demonstrators, saying that the aim of the protests "here and in Dorval is to send a clear message from the 9,500 members of the IAM at Air Canada that the way forward is not by creating low-paying jobs and contracting out." What Air Canada management is doing "borders on Lorenzo-type management," he declared.

Also speaking were Brian Charlton, a New Democratic Party member of the provincial parliament from Hamilton, Ontario; Ken Signoretti, representing the Ontario Federation of Labour; Bob Biggar, the administrative assistant to the Canadian vice-president of the IAM; and Robert McGregor, the airlines general chairman for District 148, which represents all IAM members at Air Canada.

In Toronto several members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada joined in the action. They work in airport maintenance. In Montréal, Air Canada flight attendants organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees participated.

Some workers whose jobs are threatened by contracting out have been at Air Canada for many years. Beverly Baxter, a commissary worker at Air Canada in Montréal, explained, "I have 22 years seniority. I am not trained to do anything else. They just told us they were going to contract out our jobs. The stress is terrible. One guy had a heart attack."

Ronald Lemay with 23 years service, also works in Montréal. He said, "They want to make more profits. Next they'll contract out baggage or something else. This demonstration today is what is needed."

"We were going to have this demonstration by ourselves last week here in Dorval. Then Jeannot said he would talk. But that didn't get anything. Now we have demonstrations across the country. The airline companies get together. The union has to too. We need this solidarity."



Militant/Roger Annis

Eastern strikers at Montréal's Dorval airport were part of February 14 demonstration called by the Machinists union to protest Air Canada's proposal to contract out nearly 500 jobs.



# Pittston miners' long fight against union-busting drive

BY RONI McCANN

After waging an 11-month strike against Pittston Coal Group, 1,981 union miners in three states voted February 19 to approve a four-year contract by a 63 to 37 percent margin.

United Mine Workers of America members received the pact three days earlier. It had been announced on January 1 by representatives of the coal company, the government, and the UMWA. Pittston strikers in Virginia voted 813 for, 497 against; miners in West Virginia voted 339 for, 140 against; and miners in Kentucky voted the agreement down with 95 votes for and 97 against.

The new agreement — which expires in June 1994, a year and four months later than the industry-wide pact approved in 1988 — includes, among other things, maintenance of 100 percent health coverage for miners, pensioners, and their families; wage increases; concessions to the company on work rules and flexible scheduling; and provisions for subcontracting jobs.

The contract approved by UMWA members at Pittston differs from what the coal company was shooting for when it refused to sign the national coal bargaining contract between the UMWA and most other coal operators in 1988 and sought its own pact with the union.

## What Pittston wanted

Pittston Coal Group is the largest exporter of metallurgical coal, mostly used to make steel. In 1988 Pittston Co. showed a pretax profit on its coal division of \$36.4 million. But Pittston Coal Group President Mike Odom said the company needed concessions anyway to compete on the export market.

When the Bituminous Coal Operators' Association (BCOA) and the UMWA negotiated the national pact in 1988, Pittston refused to sign and set a course demanding a separate agreement from the union with major concessions.

When the previous UMWA contract expired Jan. 31, 1988, Pittston stopped paying into the industry-wide health and retirement fund set up in 1950, cutting off medical and retirement funds for some 1,500 retired and disabled miners and dependents. Odom charged the fund with mismanagement and flatly stated, "We're not going to contribute."

Pittston executive William Byrne said health insurance for retired and disabled miners is "like a credit card that expires. Theirs expired."

Pittston demanded help from miners to pay for reduced health coverage; an end to payments into multiemployer pension funds; major revisions in work rules, including Sunday work and mandatory overtime; the right to subcontract out most mine work; and no preferential hiring at new mines of 4,000 laid-off Pittston miners.

Pittston secured a \$100 million line of credit from five banks and hired the specialist union-busting law firm and private police used by A.T. Massey Coal Co. against the UMWA in its 1984-85 strike.

Pittston's "best and final offer" was similar to the contract forced on UMWA miners after a crushing defeat of the strike against Massey. In an out-of-court settlement in November 1988, Massey won work-rule changes, Sunday work, subcontracting to nonunion mines, reduced health benefits, and a no-strike clause.

For 14 months after the union contract expired at Pittston, miners continued to work. The UMWA began a publicity campaign against the company and its financial backers. But Pittston didn't budge and refused to negotiate seriously. A strike deadline was set for Jan. 31, 1989.

After a cooling-off period proposed by the governors of three states, 1,700 Pittston miners in Virginia and West Virginia went on strike on April 5, 1989. In June 200 remaining Pittston miners in Kentucky were called out.

## Mass rallies, arrests, and walkouts

Twenty-five days after striking, Pittston miners joined some 10,000 supporters and packed the Wise County fairgrounds in Virginia, vowing to fight Pittston's union-busting attacks and protesting cop violence in the coalfields against miners engaged in peaceful civil disobedience.

"Today miners stand at a crossroads," said mine union head Richard Trumka to a thunderous roar. "We will not go back!"

As the weeks went on, more and more rallies were held as miners by the thousands were arrested for sitting in Virginia roads. Throughout the country unionists, including striking Eastern Airlines workers who had walked off their jobs March 4, 1989, in response to owner Frank Lorenzo's union-busting drive, were learning about the fight exploding in the coalfields.

In June striking miners organized a mile-long march through the West Virginia coalfields, symbolic of early union organizing battles in the region. Eastern Airlines strikers and Pittston miners toured the state, speaking to hundreds of union locals. Marchers converged on Charleston June 11, joining other striking Pittston miners, Eastern Airlines workers, unionists from throughout Appalachia, and thousands of UMWA miners from states near and far.

Addressing the rally of 10,000, Trumka called on all miners to resist Pittston's union-busting. That night UMWA miners began walking off the job throughout the coalfields in strikes that quickly spread to some 44,000 miners in 10 states. The walkouts made the strike against Pittston a fight of the entire mine union. Thousands of unionists, miners, and Eastern strikers began pouring into the coalfields to participate in rallies and sit-ins.

## Widespread solidarity

During the walkouts Pittston strikers set up Camp Solidarity in the Virginia hills. UMWA locals sent rotating delegations to staff the camp, and unionists worked to convert it into a strike solidarity command post that soon began attracting spirited workers from around the country. UMWA miners in the West, although told they should not walk out because the union needed funds, sent donations to the miners and toured one of their striking brothers to get the word out on the fight.

The Charleston, West Virginia, *Sunday Gazette Mail* interviewed Trumka in July as miners continued to stay out, demanding Pittston sign a contract. "I'd have to acknowledge that we weren't totally successful at Massey, because we now have Pittston trying to do the same thing," he said.

"But we went to school and I learned one thing at Massey: the rules are darn sure designed for us to lose. Well, this time we're going to win."

Throughout the summer and fall, Pittston strikers mobilized support for their strike, often joining up with Eastern strikers to do so.

In the coalfields state troopers and cops continued to arrest strike supporters, some 3,700 total, and judges levied fines against the union totaling \$64 million.

In September, at Pittston's corporate headquarters in Greenwich, Connecticut, Trumka addressed 1,500 unionists. The crowd cheered as the mine union president demanded a national health care bill and shorter workweek, saying, "Corporate America reigned in the '80s," but the "'90s will be ours."

On September 17, 98 miners and one miner occupied Pittston's Moss No. 3 coal preparation plant in Carbo, Virginia. A crowd of thousands gathered outside the plant and cars lined the road for miles, backing the strikers' action, which shut down production. For 80 hours miners held the facility until threatened by state authorities.

This action was a highpoint of the Pittston strike to many miners. "We feel proud that we helped make labor history at the Moss No. 3 plant," said Terry Varney, vice-president of UMWA Local 5737 in Stone, Kentucky. At Camp Solidarity the night the occupation ended, miner Estes Brown concluded, "We have so much support from others that Pittston can't hold out forever."

Pittston miners were winning increasing support for their fight and strengthening their position to win a significant victory.

The federal government, which prefers to stay out of labor battles if employers can hold their own against the workers, intervened in the coal strike as solidarity mounted for Pittston miners. After a visit to the Virginia coalfields in October, U.S. Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole said she was "concerned" for

the workers and the community. She appointed former labor secretary William Usery on October 25 to mediate a settlement in the strike.

## Miners' position strengthens

By December some 70,000 unionists and others had passed through Camp Solidarity to support the Pittston miners. Truckloads of food and clothing poured in as car, truck, and van caravans made their way to Virginia. Pittston strikers in Logan County, West Virginia, set up a second camp, and 750 miners and friends opened it December 7.

Meanwhile Pittston's losses continued to rise. Pittston Co. Chairman Paul Douglas complained that "not once has the union made any concessions" in bargaining efforts during the strike. By winter Pittston's coal operations posted an operating loss of \$25.2 million for the fourth quarter. The coal boss had spent \$20 million on "security."

## Tentative agreement

On January 1 labor secretary Dole, Pittston head Douglas, mediator Usery, and Trumka announced they had reached a settlement in the Pittston strike. Television networks throughout the country broadcast the announcement New Year's Day and millions of workers concluded that the strike was settled and were anxious to know the details.

Trumka repeatedly stressed that the tentative agreement would not enter the UMWA rank-and-file ratification process until "all lawsuits against the union" and fines had been dropped.

Days then weeks went by. Trips to Camp Solidarity dropped off and picket lines thinned out. The announcement had come as momentum in the strike was mounting, but the long period of waiting took the steam out of strike activities.

## The contract

On February 14, following court refusal to drop the \$64 million in fines against the union, UMWA President Trumka stated, "The court's decision does not present an impediment to the rank-and-file ratification of the tentative agreement." February 19 was set as the date for a vote.

Trumka also said union officials had offered 10,000 hours of community service by UMWA members in lieu of the fines.

# Camp Solidarity leader says, "miners' unity is strong"

BY RICH STUART

CARTERTON, Va. — "Before the United Mine Workers of America began its strike against the Pittston company on April 5, a 10-acre parcel of land that hugs the Clinch River in southwest Virginia was simply known as UMWA Local 1259 member Jack Bartee's backyard. Today the labor world knows it as Camp Solidarity."

So opens an article in the November 1989 *United Mine Workers Journal*. Camp Solidarity director James "Buzz" Hicks, president of UMWA Local 1259, is also well known among miners and unionists. He met almost every one of the 70,000 people that visited the camp since it was set up last June.

On February 19, 1,900 union miners in Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky ratified a contract with Pittston after an 11-month strike against union-busting attacks.

Here at the camp on the evening of the vote, Pittston miner Hicks agreed that they put up a good fight and says they still have a lot of fighting to do.

"Other unions in the country that supported us are out there on strike and need our help," said Hicks. "For example, the Eastern Airlines strikers in different areas have rallies coming up March 3 and 4. I'm sure the UMW will be well represented to support those people. We've taken care of Paul Douglas — so bring on Frank Lorenzo." Douglas and Lorenzo are the heads of Pittston and Eastern.



Militant/Rich Stuart

Pittston strikers in Virginia review contract

Meetings were held February 16 in Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia to discuss the proposed contract.

The ratified agreement includes 100 percent health coverage for miners, retirees, and their dependents, not the 80 percent coverage Pittston was fighting for.

Pittston was not able to end payments to the industry-wide health and retirement funds that enable miners to receive benefits based on the years of employment at union mines even if they change jobs.

The new health coverage set-up includes a "cost-containment provision." Every six months miners will receive \$500 to cover expenses incurred under the insurance deductible. Whatever they do not use getting medical care, they keep.

This plan amounts to a bribe for miners not to get the medical care they need in order to "help hold down costs" for Pittston. Similar to other employer schemes, such up-front bonuses undermine the base pay of workers.

## Mine safety

The approved pact allows Pittston to operate its mines seven days a week, implementing, for the first time in the mines, seven-day rotating shifts similar to the type worked by steelworkers and refinery operators. Saturdays and Sundays can be part of a miner's regular shift, eliminating weekend-rate pay.

Continued on Page 17

Hicks feels the mine union has come out of their strike stronger. "Right now the solidarity and unity in the UMW is the strongest I've ever seen in the 14 years I've been a member. I credit the men for that. It took something like this to get people to realize what's going on — we can thank Paul Douglas for bringing organized labor back to life."

Not only the mine union but the entire labor movement was strengthened from the coal strike, said Hicks. "Look at what Pittston tried to impose and then look at what we got. Pittston fought us 11 months for nothing. All corporations will look at this and learn that if they take on anybody, like the autoworkers, they'll take on the UMWA."

"If Lorenzo wants to continue his battle with the machinists, he'll have to take on the mineworkers too," Hicks said. Corporate America has banded together and working-class people are ready to give them a fight, he said. "I'm ready to start now."

Hicks wanted to send a message thanking all those who supported the Pittston strikers. Just because the Pittston strike is over is no time to sit down, he said, but time to continue the fight.

To all striking Eastern workers Hicks sends out this call, "Don't give up! It takes unity, dedication, and solidarity — hang in there and stay tough and you'll come out victorious. If you need me," says Hicks, "just call."



# Farm group in Britain hosts conference

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Seventy-five people, including 50 farmers, attended a conference in Darlington in the North-East of England last month to discuss "a more sustainable world agriculture." It was held in the local offices of the principal farmers' organization in Britain, the National Farmers Union. The majority of conference participants were dairy farmers. Most were from the local area.

The event was organized by the Farmers Third World Network, a national organization with 500 members, 100 of whom are farmers. As a "development education" organization, it receives funding from the European Community (Common Market) and from Oxfam and Christian Aid. It has a full-time coordinator and publishes a magazine, *Food Matters*. The Network has contacts with farmers' organizations in France and has the perspective of developing other international relations.

This was the first such local conference that the Network has organized. In addition to the farmers present, there were agriculturalists, students, and representatives of aid organizations. Oxfam, Voluntary Services Overseas, *Food Matters*, and the London

Pathfinder Bookshop had booths there.

The conference was addressed by eight speakers, a number of whom were involved in aid projects in different parts of the Third World. Of the eight, three were working farmers.

Following their individual presentations, the speakers participated in a round-table discussion that focused on different solutions to the problems of world agriculture today — food mountains existing next to world hunger and a growing crisis for the world's farmers. One of the scheduled panelists, Mark Ritchie, who works for the Minnesota state agricultural department, was unable to attend.

## Sharp debate

A sharp debate developed at the conference. One of the speakers, Prof. David Harvey of Newcastle University, proposed that the solution to the problems of world agriculture and hunger was lowering prices paid to farmers in the "advanced countries" through the elimination of farm subsidies. In the round table, Harvey asserted that such a proposal corresponded to the future of world farming that lay with corporate agriculture.

Hertfordshire farmer Peter Parrish disagreed. He is a grain farmer from the South-East region of the country, a member of a seven-person cooperative that farms 4,500 acres.

Parrish explained that for four of the last five years he has lost money because his costs of production were higher than what he received for selling his produce grain. Rather than lowering the price paid to farmers, Parrish argued, a rise in price is necessary. He said that Harvey's argument in favor of the market forcing prices down was false because the prices farmers receive are set by the giant agricultural corporations. Moreover, these prices have nothing to do with the prices consumers pay for food.

## Unite on common interests

Parrish suggested that farmers in Britain should unite with farmers in the Third World around their common interests. Through international farmer cooperation, farmers would learn to unite nationally. They should get politically involved and fight against the government and agribusiness, he said.

This discussion was extended in a presentation by John Gaige from the United States.

Gaige was introduced by the chair as someone who has been active within the farm movement in the United States, including as a farm workers' union activist.

## U.S. farm crisis

Gaige explained what had happened to farmers in the United States during the 1980s; how the farm crisis had led to 600,000 farmers being driven off the land, including the almost total elimination of Black farmers in the South.

He described the fight for farmers to get prices above their costs of production, for debt restructuring and alleviation, and against foreclosure. He spoke of the differing interests in the countryside between working farm families and corporate agriculture.

Gaige said that trade unions in the United States would often support farmers' demands but because of the retreat of the unions in the face of the employers' offensive in the early '80s, no significant union forces came into the farm fights at that time. He pointed to an increase in tenant farming that had followed the growing land ownership by insurance companies and banks, a result of their foreclosures on indebted farmers.

In the panel discussion, Gaige responded to Harvey's support for corporate agriculture by saying that he was in favor of more farmers in the world, not less.

## Consumers' rights

A conference "comment" was given by North Yorks farmer Howard Wass, who is a Farmers Third World Network activist. He farms 190 acres and is increasingly moving into organic farming. Wass explained that he thinks that consumers of food have the right to a say in how food is produced. He encouraged farmers to involve themselves in wider social and political issues, including opposition to nuclear power and defense of the environment.

Network coordinator Adrian Friggens and dairy farmer and activist Andy Welford, who were involved in organizing the conference, said that they considered the day to be a great success. The Network is planning more conferences, the next being in Sevenoaks in the South-East on February 23.

# 'Defenders of Cuban revolution have to answer the lies of its enemies'

BY SELVA NEBBIA

"Police prepare for day Castro falls," read a January 14 headline in the *Miami Herald*, anticipating Miami's right-wing Cuban community might get out of control in its "euphoria." The article was but one of many that have begun to appear forecasting the demise of communism in Cuba and the "fall" of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

On February 5 Florida Gov. Robert Martínez appointed a 12-member commission to assess how the hoped for overthrow of Castro would affect immigration, commerce, and tourism in Florida.

"We have been hearing this kind of thing time and time again since 1960," said Andrés Gómez in a telephone interview. Gómez is the editor of *Arelto* and a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, an organization in solidarity with Cuba.

Given the events in Eastern Europe and the recent invasion of Panama, there has been a resurgence of what Castro has described as a triumphalist feeling on the part of the U.S. rulers. This has emboldened counterrevolutionary Cuban forces in the United States.

"I think there is a sense in the Cuban community that Castro's days are numbered," said Florida State Rep. Luis Rojas. "I think the optimism is greater than ever before. . . . Fidel Castro has been isolated and his days are numbered. I really believe that." Rojas was addressing the annual José Martí parade in Hialeah on January 28.

That day in New York 1,000 right-wing Cuban exiles picketed the Cuban Mission to the United Nations, calling for Castro's ouster. The picket was by far the largest and most aggressive of the protests held every week in front of the mission.

Right-wing Cubans held a similar demonstration in Puerto Rico, said Gómez. "It was the largest action of this kind to ever take place on the island."

"These actions take place in cycles. The last time this kind of euphoria was generated was at the beginning of the Reagan years," explained Gómez. "Those who oppose the Cuban revolution think it is in crisis now and that its fall is inevitable. But this is only a reflection of their lack of understanding of the revolutionary process in Cuba, its strength, and the legitimacy it has among the Cuban people."

Washington "thinks it can do to Cuba what it did in Panama," Wilfredo Moreno, head of the Alliance of Workers of the Community (ATC), said in a phone interview February 13. "But that will never happen. In Cuba everybody is armed and will not stand for such an invasion." The Alliance is an organization of Cubans in Miami who favor open relations between the United States and Cuba.

"Those of us who defend the Cuban revolution have to answer the lies of Cuba's enemies," said Elvira, a member of the ATC. "They are feeling quite high at the thought

that Cuba is finished, and we have to set the record straight."

Blanca, also with the ATC, referred to the recent U.S. Coast Guard firing on a Cuban cargo ship as an "outrage." "They could have killed the whole crew," she stated. "Washington has no right to do such a thing, and we must fight against such provocations." Both ATC members were interviewed by phone earlier this month.

Leading the commission set up by Martínez is Jorge Mas Canoso, chairman of the Cuban American National Foundation, the right-wing exile group that lobbied for the

creation of Radio Martí and for the funding of TV Martí.

TV Martí is now scheduled to go on the air some time in March. The station, which will broadcast from Florida to Havana, has been denounced by the Cuban government as a violation of international law and Cuba's sovereignty.

"The ATC has joined other organizations in the past to organize protests against acts of aggression like TV Martí," explained Elvira. "And we will continue to respond energetically to acts by the U.S. government against Cuba or any other country such as the recent invasion of Panama."

# Cuban artists beat exclusion move in Miami

BY DAN FEIN

MIAMI — A victory for free speech was won February 7 when the Miami City Commission dropped its efforts to evict the Cuban Museum of Art and Culture from the city-owned building where it has been housed.

The Cuban Museum was founded by Cubans who wished to establish a cultural center for the exile community. It became a focus of controversy after a 1988 show that included the works of Cuban artists who either supported or had not publicly broken with Cuba's revolutionary government. Under pressure from opponents of the museum, the Miami City Commission voted December 14 to evict the museum for "lease violations."

Last month 1,000 people demonstrated their support for freedom of artistic expression by attending the opening of an exhibit by Cuban artist Nicolás Guillén Landrián. A series of panel discussions to be held at the museum, which is located in "Little Havana," were publicized at the event.

The first discussion was held on January 25. Entitled "Freedom of Expression in Cuba," it drew 40 people. The panelists expressed the view that freedom of artistic expression is absent in Cuba.

Two weeks later, a second meeting was held on "Miami and Freedom of Expression." Sixty people heard a panel of speakers describe past acts of terrorism and intimidation carried out by right-wing Cubans against those with whom they politically disagreed.

Panelist Sergio López Miró described his involvement years ago in attempts to disrupt the showing of the Cuban film *Lucía*. He saluted the presence in the audience of Andrés Gómez, a leader of the Cuba solidarity organization, the Antonio Maceo Brigade.

In the discussion period a spokesman for the museum, Ramón Cernuda, commented on the growth of tolerance within the Cuban-American community.

But just an hour after the meeting, Cernuda and the administrative director of the museum, Osvaldo Monzón, were threatened with a baseball bat by José Juara, a right-wing

Cuban who had been part of previous protests of the Cuban Museum.

A third program, on "The First Amendment and Freedom of Expression," was held the day after the city government backed off from its eviction attempt. Describing the bombing of her home two years ago after having organized a meeting to discuss dialogue with the Cuban government, María Cristina Herrera said, "I will not be intimidated. Take any risks, but don't give up your rights."

Herrera has been urging dialogue for 20 years and took note of the changed political atmosphere in Miami. "This is exemplified by the meeting tonight and my presence here," she said.

At the same meeting where it dropped its efforts to evict the museum, the city commission also voted not to renew the museum's lease when it expires in April 1991. It also voted unanimously to find a site where opponents of the Cuban Museum can start their own museum.



Sign reads, "Cernuda is right," a reference to Ramón Cernuda, an official of the Cuban Museum. He has stood up to right-wing attacks by showing the work of Cuban artists who support or have not publicly broken with Cuban government.

Militant/Nancy Cole



# 'The masses of our people are r

## Speech by Nelson Mandela to mass rally in Soweto presses

The following is the full text of Nelson Mandela's speech to a mass rally upon his return to his home in Soweto, South Africa, February 13.

Some 125,000 jammed the soccer stadium to welcome Mandela. His speech was repeatedly interrupted with applause and cheering. The text is based on a transcript published in the New York-based *Daily Challenge* and from one by CNN news network. Subheadings and footnotes are by the *Militant*.

Comrades, friends, and the people of Soweto at large: I greet you in the name of the heroic struggle of our people to establish justice and freedom for all in our country.

I salute our president, Comrade Oliver Tambo, for his leadership of the ANC that has put our organization and the hopes of the people it represents on the political center stage in South Africa.

I salute our rank-and-file members and combatants of the ANC, who have sacrificed all for the love of their country and their people.

I salute the South African Communist Party for its consistent and determined contribution to the struggle for a democratic government in South Africa. Our alliance is built on the unshakable foundations of our united struggle for a nonracial democracy.

I salute the United Democratic Front, the Congress of South African Trade Unions [COSATU], the National Education Crisis Committee, and many other formations of the MDM [Mass Democratic Movement]. The work of the UDF has insured that none of the reformist strategies of the government have succeeded.

I salute the working class of our country. Our movement would not be where it is without your organized strength. You are an indispensable force in the struggle to end exploitation and oppression in South Africa.

We salute the victory of SWAPO [South West Africa People's Organisation], with whom we have shared plenty of battles against colonialism and apartheid. You have established your right to self-determination,



"The ANC is on the political center stage in South Africa," said Nelson Mandela.

and your victory is our victory.

I pay tribute to the many religious communities and religious leaders who carried the struggle for justice forward and held our banner high during the most brutal periods of repression against our people.

I salute the courage and the heroism of the youth of South Africa, organized under the South African Youth Congress. At this point, I wish to pay tribute to Comrade Hector Peterson who, together with hundreds of young activists, were mowed down by apartheid bullets in 1976. We gained inspiration by your courage and conviction during our lonely years on the island.<sup>1</sup>

Today, my return to Soweto fills my heart with joy. At the same time, I also return with a deep sense of sadness, sadness to learn that you are still suffering under an inhuman system. The housing shortage, the school crisis, unemployment, and the crime rate still remain.

I am even more proud to be a member of this community because of the pioneering role it has played in the struggle for the democratization of local government. You have built the democratic structures of local government in Soweto, such as street committees and civic organizations, that give practical import to our desire to let the people govern.

I fully support the call made by our people for democratic systems of local government that will have a single tax base. In this regard, I believe that the campaigns for open cities must receive our active support.

As proud as I am to be part of the Soweto community, I have been greatly disturbed by the statistics of crime that I have read in the newspapers. Although I understand the deprivations our people suffer, I must make it clear that the level of crime in our township is unhealthy and must be eliminated as a matter of urgency.

It is through the creation of democratic and accountable structures that we can achieve this. I salute the anticrime campaigns conducted by our organizations.

### Apartheid education

The crisis in education that exists in South Africa demands special attention. The education crisis in black schools is a political crisis. It arises out of the fact that our people have no vote and, therefore, cannot make the government of the day responsive to their needs.

Apartheid education is inferior, and a crime against humanity. Education is an area that needs attention, that needs the attention of all our people — students, parents, teach-

ers, workers, and all other organized sectors of our community.

Let us build disciplined structures, SRCs [Students' Representative Councils], a united national teachers' organization, parent structures, and parent-teacher-student associations, and the National Education Crisis Committee.

It has been the policy of the ANC that the school and the entire education system is a site of struggle. The actual process of learning must take place in the schools. I want to add my voice therefore to the call made at the beginning of the year that all students must return to school and learn. We must continue our struggle for people's education within the school system, and utilize its resources to achieve our goals.

I call on the government to build more schools, to train and employ more teachers, and to abandon its policies of forcing our children out of the school system by use of various methods, such as the age restrictions and their refusal to admit those who fail their classes. We have consistently called for a unitary nonracial education system that develops the potential of all our youth.

### Armed struggle

As I said when I stood on the dock at the Rivonia trial 27 years ago, and as I said on the day of my release in Cape Town, the ANC will pursue the armed struggle against the government as long as the violence of apartheid continues.

Our armed combatants act under the political leadership of the ANC. Cadres of our people's army are skilled, not only in military affairs, but act as the political commissars of our movement.

We are therefore disturbed that there are certain elements amongst those who claim to support the liberation struggle who use violence against our people; the hijacking and setting alight of vehicles and the harassment of innocent people are criminal acts that have no place in our struggle. We condemn that.

Our major weapon of struggle against apartheid oppression and exploitation is our people organized into mass formations of the democratic movement. This is achieved by politically organizing our people, not through the use of violence against our people.

I call, in the strongest possible way, for us to act with the dignity and discipline that our just struggle for freedom deserves.

Our victories must be celebrated in peace and joy. In particular, I call on our people in Natal to unite against the perpetrators of violence. I call on the leadership of the UDF,

2. In Natal Province, located in the eastern part of the country, the Pretoria-appointed Kwa-Zulu chief Gatsha Buthelezi has used violence against anti-apartheid forces. His group Inkatha includes armed vigilantes and has attacked UDF and COSATU activists.

1. Robben Island, the maximum security prison for Black males, is where Mandela and other ANC leaders spent most of their time in confinement.

COSATU, and Inkatha<sup>2</sup> to take decisive steps to revive the peace initiative and end the scourge on our proud history.

Let us act with political foresight and develop bold steps to end this mindless violence. Joint initiatives at local, regional, and national levels between the parties concerned must call for restraint. The security force must be compelled to act with absolute impartiality and to arrest those offenders who continue with violence.

We understand that attempts are being made to disrupt the unity of the oppressed by stirring tensions between African and Indian communities of Natal. Let us build on the proud tradition of unity in action as embodied in the Dadoo-Xuma-Naicker Pact, which was fully endorsed by our great hero, Chief Luthuli.<sup>3</sup>

I am also concerned by the ongoing violence perpetuated by certain sections of the security forces against our peaceful marches and demonstrations. We condemn this.

I understand that implementing apartheid laws has made it extremely difficult for many honest policemen to fulfill their role as servants of the public. You are seen in the eyes of many of our people as an instrument of repression and injustice.

We call on the police to abandon apartheid and to serve the interest of the people. Join our march to a new South Africa, where you also have a place.

3. In 1947 leaders of the South African Indian Congress, Yusuf Dadoo and G.M. Naicker, signed a pact with ANC leader A.B. Xuma, pledging cooperation between the two organizations in the fight against the apartheid regime. The agreement marked a significant step forward in breaking down the divisions between the Black and Indian populations.

## ANC leaders

The following statement was issued by the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress of South Africa on February 16 from Lusaka, Zambia. Subheadings and footnotes are by the *Militant*.

The National Executive Committee of the African National Congress met in Lusaka, Zambia, from Feb. 14 to 16, 1990, to consider the situation arising from the decisions announced on Feb. 2 and 10, 1990, by Pretoria's State President F.W. de Klerk, affecting the system of repression against the democratic movement which the white National Party regime had instituted during the 42 years of its illegitimate rule of South Africa.

As is known, de Klerk also spelt out policy positions of his party and government, which he presented as being intended to address the issue of ending the system of apartheid.

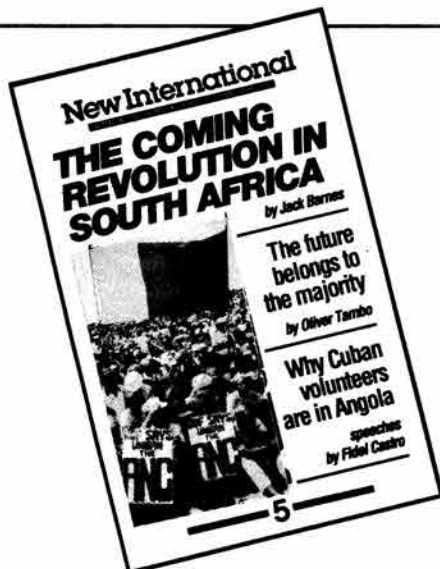
During its deliberations, the NEC benefited from proposals submitted to its meeting by the president of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, and other leaders of the ANC based within South Africa.

It reaffirmed the continuing and urgent responsibility of the ANC and all other democratic and anti-apartheid forces, both South African and international, to continue the struggle to end the apartheid system as quickly as possible.

The NEC recognised the unbanning of the ANC and other organisations as an important factor which contributes to the creation of a climate conducive to negotiations. It also viewed in a positive light other measures such as the partial lifting of the press restrictions and the rescinding of banning orders affecting various persons.

It welcomed the suspension of the death penalty as an important first step which must without delay, lead to the unconditional release of all political activists sentenced to death and an end to the barbaric practice of capital punishment.

The NEC, however, also concluded that the Pretoria regime has not yet created a



This issue of *New International* focuses on the revolutionary struggle in South Africa, its impact throughout southern Africa and worldwide, and the tasks of opponents of apartheid in the labor movement internationally.

The feature article, *The Coming Revolution in South Africa* by Jack Barnes, discusses the national, democratic revolution to overthrow the South African apartheid regime and establish a nonracial democratic republic.

Also included:

- The Freedom Charter
- The Future Belongs to the Majority, a message by African National Congress President Oliver Tambo
- Why Cuban Volunteers Are in Angola, three speeches by Cuban President Fidel Castro

Send \$5 to New International, 410 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014



# making history'

## freedom struggle's goals

We note, with appreciation, that there are certain areas where policemen are acting with restraint and fulfilling the real role of protecting all our people, irrespective of their race.

### ANC's economic policies

Much debate has been sparked off by the ANC policies on the economy relating to nationalization and the redistribution of wealth. We believe that apartheid has created a heinous system of exploitation in which a racist minority monopolizes economic wealth while the vast majority of the oppressed are black people condemned to poverty.

South Africa is a wealthy country. It is the labor of black workers that has built the cities, roads, and factories we see. They cannot be excluded from sharing this wealth.

The ANC is just as committed to economic growth and productivity as the present employers claim to be. Yet, we are also committed to insure that a democratic government has the resources to address the inequalities caused by apartheid.

Our people need proper houses, not ghettos like Soweto. Workers need a living wage and the right to join unions of their own choice, and to participate in determining policies that affect their lives.

Our history has shown that apartheid has stunted growth, created mass unemployment, and led to spiraling inflation that has undermined the standard of living of the majority of our people, both black and white. Only a participatory democracy involving our people in the structures of decision making at all levels of society can insure that this is corrected.

We will certainly introduce policies that address the economic problems that we face.

We call on employers to recognize the fundamental rights of workers in our country.

### Bona fide negotiations

We are marching to a new future, based on strong foundations of respect for each other, achieved through bona fide negotiations. In particular, we call for genuine negotiations to achieve a fair labor relations act and mechanisms to resolve conflict. Employers can play their role in shaping the new South Africa by acknowledging these rights.

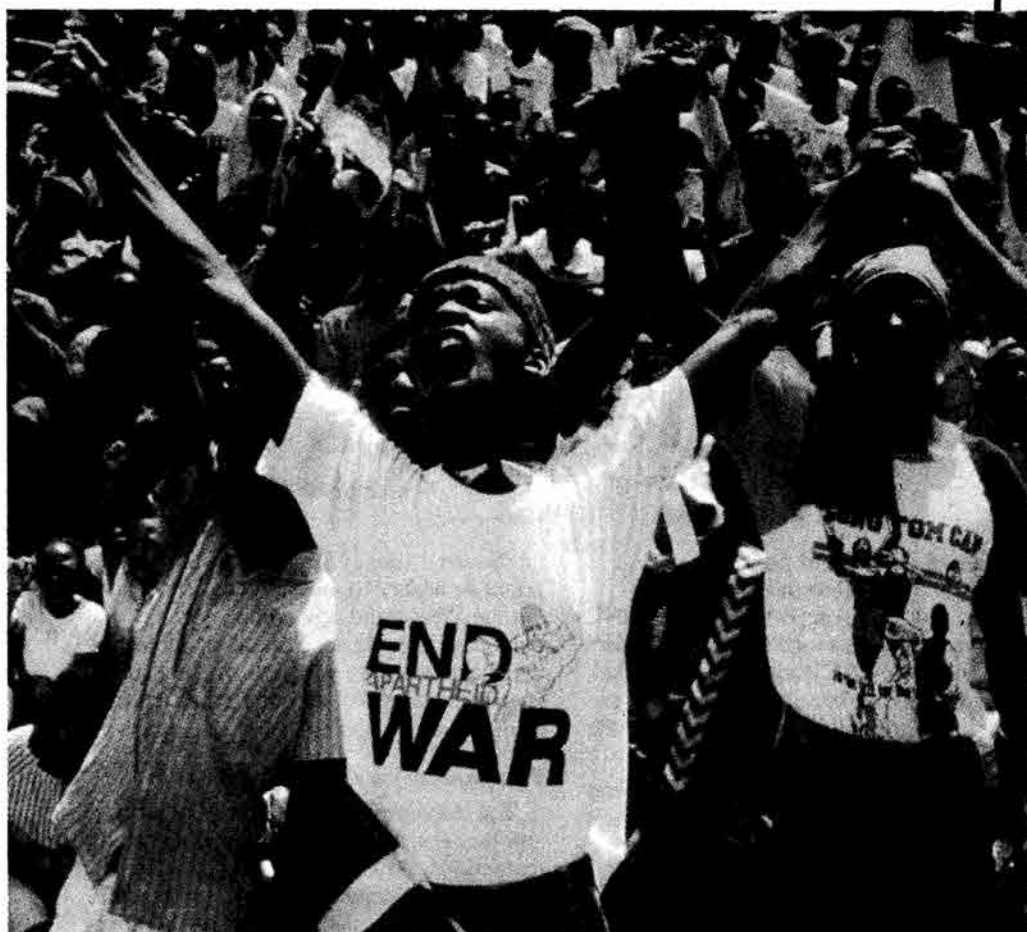
We call on workers, black and white, to join industrial trade unions, organized under the banner of our nonracial progressive federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, which has played an indispensable role in our struggle against apartheid.

A number of obstacles to the creation of a nonracial democratic South Africa remain and need to be tackled. The fears of whites about their rights and place in a South Africa they do not control exclusively are an obstacle we must understand and address.

I stated in 1964 that I and the ANC are as opposed to black domination as we are to white domination. We must accept, however, that our statements and declarations alone will not be sufficient to allay the fears of white South Africans. We must clearly demonstrate our goodwill to our white compatriots and convince them by our conduct and arguments that a South Africa without apartheid will be a better home for all.

A new South Africa has to eliminate the racial hatred and suspicion caused by apartheid, and offer guarantees to all its citizens of peace, security, and prosperity.

We call on those who out of ignorance have collaborated with apartheid in the past to join our liberation struggle. No man or



Youth at Soweto rally call for an end to apartheid

woman who has abandoned apartheid will be excluded from our movement towards a non-racial, united, and democratic South Africa based on one person, one vote on a common voter's roll.

Our primary task remains to unite our people across the length and breadth of our country. Our democratic organizations must be consolidated in all our sectors.

Democratic political practice and accountable leadership must be strengthened on all fronts. Our struggle against apartheid, though seemingly uncertain, must be intensified on all fronts. Let each one of you and all of our people give the enemies of peace and liberty no space to take us back to the dark hell of

apartheid.

It is only disciplined mass action that assures us of the victory we seek. Go back to your schools, factories, mines, and communities; build on the massive energies that recent events in our country have unleashed by strengthening disciplined mass organizations.

We are going forward. The march towards freedom and justice is irreversible.

I have spoken about freedom in my lifetime. Your struggle, your commitment, and your discipline has released me to stand before you today.

These basic principles will propel us to a  
Continued on Page 17

# ship meeting outlines initiatives to end apartheid

climate conducive to negotiations, as has been called for by the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa and the international community.

It therefore calls on the regime specifically to release all political prisoners and detainees, end the state of emergency, repeal all repressive legislation, halt all political trials, and remove all troops from the townships.

To help achieve these objectives in the shortest possible time, it resolved to meet Mr. de Klerk as soon as possible to discuss with him the need to address these issues so that a climate conducive to negotiations is created. Its delegation will be composed of the leaders of the ANC based within the country as well as members of the NEC based outside the country.

The NEC also considers it of vital importance that it should meet the leaders of the ANC who are inside South Africa, as well as those of the Mass Democratic Movement and other anti-apartheid forces. It therefore resolved to send a delegation into South Africa as soon as the necessary arrangements have been made.

It further resolved that it is important immediately to begin the work of re-establishing the ANC within the country. It has therefore constituted the leaders within the country into an organ under the NEC charged with the task of carrying out this work, working under the chairmanship of Comrade Walter Sisulu.

The NEC calls on all members of the ANC, as well as those of our compatriots who had already taken steps to constitute themselves into ANC units, to work directly with and under this leadership collective.

### Return of ANC

The NEC resolved to take immediate steps to prepare for the organised return to South Africa of the leadership and membership of the ANC.

It also recognised that over the years a serious brain drain had occurred with the emigration from South Africa of many people who were opposed to the apartheid system.

It therefore resolved to take steps to encourage the return of these exiles as well, so that they can contribute to the democratic transformation of our country and make an effective contribution to the reconstruction and development of a post-apartheid South Africa.

In the light of the new developments, the NEC resolved that the next National Conference of the ANC will be held inside South Africa from the 16th of December, 1990. The planned National Consultative Conference originally scheduled for June this year will therefore no longer take place. Conference preparations will however continue, both inside and outside the country.

The NEC welcomed the unbanning of the SACP (South African Communist Party). It reaffirmed the importance of the alliance of the ANC, the SACP, and the organised workers of our country. It resolved that this historic alliance will continue to function with the necessary restructuring having taken place to meet the new situation.

It also reviewed the relations of the ANC with other democratic and anti-apartheid formations within South Africa. As already indicated, it resolved to enter into discussions with these to assess the recent developments. It reiterated its view that, at this stage, the UDF (United Democratic Front) and its affiliates should continue to function and mobilise their constituencies.

The NEC is gravely concerned at the continuing violence, especially in Natal and Uitenhage. It reaffirmed the necessity to take urgent steps to stop this destructive conflict. It therefore confirmed earlier decisions that the leadership within the country should intervene immediately to end this fratricidal carnage. It calls on all those who have previously blocked attempts to find a solution to cooperate with these leaders in the interest of life itself.

The NEC reiterated the fact that the masses of our people continue to suffer under the apartheid system. It restated that even when

a climate for negotiations is created, this will not mean that this system will have been abolished. Therefore the struggle for a united, democratic, and nonracial South Africa must and will continue.

In this regard, it considered, with all due seriousness, suggestions that it should unilaterally suspend the armed struggle. While appreciating the sincerity of purpose underlying these suggestions, it however confirmed that the only just and correct way to approach this question is to adhere to the positions contained in the Harare and UN Declarations.<sup>1</sup> It therefore reiterates that, upon the creation of a climate conducive to negotiations, the ANC will seek to negotiate with the Pretoria regime a suspension of hostilities by both sides.

The NEC views with grave concern and strongly condemns the continuing campaign of repression carried out by the South African and bantustan police and armies. The state of emergency and repressive legislation, such as the Internal Security Act, which have been maintained, legalise and encourage this campaign of terror against the people.

The ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe<sup>2</sup> have a responsibility to defend the people against this terror. There can therefore be no question of a unilateral moratorium or a suspension of the armed struggle in a situation in which the violence of the apartheid system continues unabated. The Pretoria regime has an urgent responsibility to take all the necessary measures to end this violence and thus create the situation when the present obligation on our part to act in defence of the people, arms in hand, will fall away.

The NEC reaffirms the need for the con-

1. The Organization of African Unity adopted a declaration Aug. 21, 1989, in Harare, Zimbabwe, calling on the regime to end a range of repressive laws and practices and to negotiate with the liberation movement. The United Nations adopted a similar resolution in December.

2. Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) is the military wing of the ANC.

tinuation of mass political action to achieve the objectives contained in the resolutions of the Conference for a Democratic Future<sup>3</sup> and the January 8 statement of the NEC, to realise the intention of the "Year of People's Action for a Democratic South Africa."

The international community imposed sanctions against South Africa with the express purpose of ending the apartheid system. There can therefore be no justification for lifting these sanctions at this stage. The NEC strongly condemns the position taken by the British government on this issue.

These positions not only hinder the process leading to the speedy liquidation of the apartheid system, but are a betrayal of decisions of the European Community and the UN General Assembly, to which the British government is party, that sanctions would not be lifted until profound and irreversible changes had taken place in keeping with the objectives contained in the UN Declaration on South Africa, adopted unanimously last December.

The National Executive Committee therefore calls on the forthcoming ministerial meeting of the European Community to reject the call of the Thatcher government to lift sanctions and thus repulse its efforts to weaken the international struggle to end the apartheid system.

The NEC reaffirmed that our country's problems can only be solved when South Africa has been transformed into a nonracial democracy, in which the fundamental rights of all our people, both black and white, would be guaranteed. It therefore calls on all forces committed to this perspective further to consolidate their unity and continue to act together to advance towards the common goal.

The struggle continues!  
The people's victory over the apartheid system is assured!

3. A broadly representative meeting of anti-apartheid groups, the Conference for a Democratic Future, was held inside South Africa in December 1989.



# ANC takes initiatives in freedom struggle



Militant/Jon Hillson  
Celebration on 125th Street in Harlem, New York, on the day ANC leader Nelson Mandela was freed.

Continued from front page  
South Africa next December.

When asked by reporters if the ANC trusted the regime enough to send its leaders into the country, ANC leader Alfred Nzo said, "We are doing so because the ANC is unbanned. We are entitled to work inside the country."

The step-up in the struggle to bring an end to the apartheid system comes on the heels of a string of concessions by the governing National Party. Banning orders and restrictions on the ANC, trade unions, and other anti-apartheid organizations were lifted, press restrictions eased, some political prisoners released, and executions suspended. And, after 27½ years of imprisonment, ANC leader Nelson Mandela was unconditionally released from jail.

Anti-apartheid leader Patrick Lekota, addressing a meeting of 2,000 at Riverside Church in New York, said, "Thirty thousand housing units in the white areas [of South Africa] are empty. We will enter those homes," said Lekota, the publicity secretary of the United Democratic Front.

The New York meeting celebrating the release of Mandela pledged to press forward the international fight to isolate the apartheid regime.

The UDF mobilized thousands in 1989 to "defy" apartheid legislation. These actions will continue, explained Lekota, until apartheid is dismantled.

Because of laws enforcing segregated housing, many Blacks are homeless even though homes are available, he said. Moreover, 87 percent of the land in South Africa is off limits to Blacks. In response, the UDF leader continued, "we will identify in the coming months that land which is under direct government control, and we will move our people onto it."

Lekota added, "In our country we are subjected to inferior education. We will now defy the government and call on our UDF supporters to open their schools so Black children can enter."

In a series of press interviews from his home in Soweto, Mandela spelled out the aims and goals of the liberation movement.

Interviews with the ANC leader have been carried on major TV news networks and programs, in newspaper and magazine articles, and on radio broadcasts around the world. "We want a nonracial society," he told one reporter. "We have fought against white domination; we have fought against Black domination. We will come to power on the basis of the Freedom Charter."

The Freedom Charter, approved at a broad congress in 1955, is the guiding document of the national democratic struggle and begins, "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white."

"We said in 1961 that it [the armed struggle] will continue until our demands are met — one man, one vote. We are very near," Mandela concluded.

One plank of the Freedom Charter calls for the nationalization of mines, banking, and other vital sectors of the economy. This part of the democratic program has come under attack from leaders of the whites-only National and Conservative parties.

These steps are needed, Mandela said, to develop and improve the living standards of Blacks throughout the country.

In his speech to the homecoming rally in Soweto, Mandela appealed to all organizations in Natal Province to begin talks aimed at ending years of violent attacks on groups supporting the Freedom Charter. He called on those previously opposed to the liberation struggle to join in "our movement towards a nonracial, united, and democratic South Africa."

Noting the upheaval in Eastern Europe and

the Soviet Union, Mandela told another reporter he wished to see a government official "in the West stand up and honestly say that there have been mistakes made by subjecting the entire world to imperialism and causing such immeasurable suffering on the masses of the world's people."

## Polarization inside South Africa

The decision by the National Party and a substantial section of the ruling circles to lift restrictions, do away with aspects of apartheid rule, and open up political space comes as a result of the rising anti-apartheid movement inside the country and growing isolation of the apartheid regime internationally.

The National Party's election program in September 1989 stated, "Boycotts, sanctions and disinvestment have strained the economy of the country and of every business and household."

The regime's finance minister stated that "a full-scale effort to break the isolation imposed on us" is needed through "correct economic measures and political progress."

The political landscape in the country has been dramatically altered, resulting in sharpening polarization.

Mandela and other ANC leaders have addressed huge rallies for the first time in decades. Anti-apartheid rallies and marches have taken place across the country.

A busload of students from a predominantly white university in Johannesburg toured Soweto and stopped in front of



Militant/Margrethe Siem  
Anti-apartheid leader Patrick Lekota spoke at New York meeting of 2,000 to celebrate Mandela's release.

Mandela's house. For many in the group, organized by the National Union of South African Students, it was the first time visiting a Black township. The students spoke with Mandela, got back on the bus, and burst into a Zulu protest song, "Mandela, We Will Follow You."

On February 15 a march and rally of 15,000–20,000 whites protested Mandela's release and the unbanning of the ANC.

Organized by the pro-apartheid opposition Conservative Party, the event drew a sizable contingent from the openly fascist Afrikaner Resistance Movement.

Conservative leader Andries Treurnicht told the rally, "We have a love of what is ours, and we shall protect it!" Treurnicht denounced de Klerk as a traitor to the Afrikaners and vowed to continue mobilizations to oust him from power.

Some in the crowd carried effigies of Mandela hanging from a gallows. "Racial mixing means racial death," one sign read. A number of Nazi flags and arm bands were evident, and hundreds wore uniforms of the fascist group. Signs with anti-Semitic slogans were also held by some in the crowd.

Meetings, rallies, and church events continued worldwide throughout the week in celebration of Mandela's freedom.

In Atlanta 500 rallied at an event sponsored by over 50 organizations in the city. An event in Pittsburgh drew 250, and 100 marched in Cleveland.

A march and rally of 300 in Frankfurt, West Germany, greeted the release of Mandela and called for continued sanctions against South Africa.

The British government broke ranks with the rest of the members of the European Economic Community and ended its ban on new investments in South Africa.

Douglas Hurd, British representative to a meeting of the 12 EEC countries' foreign ministers, pressed for an easing of restrictions

on South Africa. Portugal was the only government to join Britain in the call.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher also suffered a setback in her antisandictions campaign in the European Parliament. Of the 32 representatives from Thatcher's Conservative Party, only 11 voted against a resolution calling for the continuation of sanctions.

"There can... be no justification for lifting these sanctions at this stage," the ANC said. The positions of the British government "hinder the process leading to the speedy liquidation of the apartheid system," it concluded.

Bob Braxton from Atlanta, Marea Himelgrin from New York, and Lüko Willms from Frankfurt, West Germany, contributed to this article.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

GREG McCARTAN

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, Canada, and New Zealand, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression.

During February, Black History Month, a number of Pathfinder's titles on Black history are being featured by chain bookstores and others across the United States.

Pathfinder bookstores, located in 45 cities in seven countries, have been putting a special focus on the range of titles published by Pathfinder, which together make a considerable contribution to the understanding of Black history and its place in the history of working-class struggles and current politics.

February 21 marks the 25th anniversary of the assassination of Malcolm X. This week's column centers on books by and about the revolutionary leader. The addresses of Pathfinder bookstores are listed on page 16.

Record orders have been logged in the Pathfinder business office over the last several weeks for titles on Black history, making for one of the highest sales months ever for the publishing house.

Along with *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle Is My Life*, Pathfinder's titles by and about Malcolm X are in the highest demand. One book chain ordered 2,000 copies of *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. Several hundred copies of two books of Malcolm's speeches, *By Any Means Necessary* and *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, and two titles on his life and political evolution, *The Last Year of Malcolm X* and *The Assassination of Malcolm X*, were also ordered.

Another distributor sent in an order for 2,280 Malcolm X titles, and several universities have added *The Last Speeches* to the reading material for Black history courses.

European *Stars and Stripes*, which supplies books to the U.S. military's bases in Europe, ordered 1,800 of the Malcolm X books.

Increased sales of the books are a result of a special promotional effort by the publishing house, including a press release on the popularity of the Malcolm X titles and production of display posters

and leaflets for use by distributors. In addition, sales trips across the United States by Pathfinder representatives in 1989 broadened the knowledge of the range and availability of the publishing house's titles.

Local Pathfinder bookstores have also stepped up their promotions during Black History Month. Bookstore supporters in Baltimore expanded the number of hours the store is open every week. *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* is the highest selling title at the store. "We have a hard time keeping it in stock," reports one volunteer.

In Detroit and New York a leaflet produced by Pathfinder listing the English- and Spanish-language titles on Black history has been reproduced and widely distributed. A special display of the 11" X 17" photos of Malcolm X is prominent in the New York store. Volunteers at both stores report they are making special efforts to set up tables at political events in the city.

The *New York Amsterdam News* and the Jackson, Mississippi, *Jackson Advocate* are among newspapers reporting on the prominent displays at major bookstore chains across the country of works by Malcolm X and other Pathfinder titles.

The articles quote Steve Clark, director of the publishing house, explaining the bookstore displays "reflect the renewed and growing interest in the ideas and example of Malcolm X."

Interest in *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* is also being spurred by reviews in a wide range of newspapers and magazines, most recently *Ebony*, *Kliatt Paperback Book Guide*, and the *Guardian*.

The widely distributed *Kliatt* says, "Any library that has *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (and all should) will want this book with 'six never before published speeches and interviews.'"

The review explains, "The last speeches of this charismatic man are a valuable addition to our understanding of his philosophy. His assassination in 1965 eliminated a forceful and provocative leader."

*Ebony* says the speeches "offer a look at the growth and change in Malcolm X's philosophy during the period, and hint at the greatness that was snuffed out prematurely."



# Canada judicial system victimizes Blacks in Nova Scotia, gov't study bares racism

BY ROGER ANNIS

PRESTON, Nova Scotia — Four Black youths are fighting continued victimization by federal cops and the courts in Nova Scotia, one of Canada's Atlantic Coast provinces.

Their fight takes on added importance following the January 26 release of a provincial government study on the treatment of Blacks and Native people by the judicial system. The commission documents widespread racism and abuse within the system.

The youths face criminal charges of "causing a disturbance" that arose out of events at Cole Harbour District High School January 9 to 11, 1989. Fighting occurred on the school grounds during those three days between scores of Black and white students.

The fighting was touched off when Black students were pelted with snowballs and verbal abuse by white students.

Police brought charges against 18 youths. In addition, five Black students were suspended from school for the remainder of the year, and five white students received five-day suspensions.

Under the pressure of Black and white parents working together, authorities dropped all the charges and suspensions — except those against the four Black youths.

Preston is a district of majority-Black communities on the eastern edge of the Halifax-Dartmouth metropolitan area. High school students are bused seven miles to Cole Harbour High. The school has 1,700 students, of whom 135 are Black.

Evangeline Cain-Grant, the president of the Parent-Student Association of Preston (PSAP), described this case in an interview here.

The PSAP was formed in January 1989 to fight the victimization of the students involved in the fighting and to find solutions

to the problems of racism in the Nova Scotia education system, she said.

"What happened at Cole Harbour High," Cain-Grant explained, "was the result of years and years of neglect. Children there are taught white, middle-class values. The history of Nova Scotia's Black people is never taught."

"Children go through school without any member of the Black race being portrayed positively. Naturally this affects relations among all the students."

"There is more to our history than slavery," she said. "We have a long and rich history in Nova Scotia. We have a proud history, and

**'There's more to our history than slavery, we demand that it be part of the curriculum.'**

we demand that it be a part of the regular school curriculum."

The PSAP has launched a civil lawsuit against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, charging it with conducting a racially biased investigation of the fighting at Cole Harbour High. The RCMP interviewed many white students, some on several occasions, explains the PSAP, and obtained at least 13 written statements from them.

Statements were obtained from only two Black students and one Black nonstudent, and all three of these people were later charged.

The PSAP is calling for a public inquiry into the treatment of Blacks and Native people by the education system in Nova Scotia.

It has received public support for its campaign, but the provincial government remains unmoved.

The PSAP's concerns were underlined by events at the Nova Scotia Community College in Stellarton on January 23.

On that day Jeremy Paris, an 18-year-old Black student, was beaten and hospitalized by a gang of eight white students while dozens of students, teachers, and school bus drivers watched. Isabel Izzard, Paris' cousin and an eyewitness, said people in the crowd shouted, "Grab him, beat him, beat him!" She was prevented from going for help.

Paris is one of four Black students at the school.

Henderson Paris, Jeremy's father, angrily condemned the actions of the Stellarton police. They refused to send officers to the scene when telephoned. Bowing to public pressure later that evening, they agreed to begin an investigation — the following day.

**Call for investigation, prosecution**

The father and the Black United Front of Nova Scotia have called for an investigation by the Human Rights Commission and for the prosecution of those involved in the attack. One of the assailants was charged several days later.

Education Minister Ron Giffin has rejected the PSAP's call for a public inquiry into the education system.

Toni Goree, another Black parent, went public in November with her fight to protect her children from racist abuse in the rural school system near Stellarton. School officials in her county have refused to provide adequate protection from abuse on school buses and in the school.

Goree was one of several speakers at two public rallies in the Halifax area in January

to mark the first anniversary of the Cole Harbour events and to back the PSAP's demands. Hundreds of people attended the rallies. Other speakers represented the Black Action Defense Committee of Toronto and the African National Congress of South Africa.

At one of the rallies, PSAP lawyer Davies Bagambiire detailed phone calls he has recently received threatening his life. One caller identified himself as "James Earl Ray" (the assassin of Martin Luther King, Jr.).

The PSAP is appealing for support in its campaign to drop the charges against the Cole Harbour High youth and for a public inquiry into Nova Scotia's education system. Letters should be sent to Education Minister Ron Giffin, Box 578, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2L6, Canada. Letters should also go to Attorney General Tom McInnis at the same address.

Copies of letters, as well as statements of support, should be sent to the Parent-Student Association of Preston, Box 2813, Dartmouth East, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2W 4R4, Canada.

## Nova Scotia Blacks face legacy of racism and discrimination

There are between 25,000 and 30,000 Blacks living in Nova Scotia, out of a total population of 850,000. They are largely the descendants of two waves of settlers — free settlers and slaves who came to the province at the same time as Europeans and American Loyalists in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, and workers who came at the turn of the 20th century to work in the expanding steel mills and coal mines.

From the beginning they faced massive discrimination in employment, land, housing, education, and health care. Most Black settlements were located on barren, unproductive lands on the outskirts of towns where whites lived.

Until 1954 Blacks were segregated by law into a separate, poorly funded school system. De facto segregation continued for many years after that. There is still one all-Black school in Nova Scotia, a primary school in North Preston.

Militant struggles for the rights of Blacks began in the 1960s, and these have succeeded in achieving political and social progress for Blacks. But there remains much inequality and injustice.

Unemployment exceeds 50 percent in most of the several dozen Black communities in the province.

— R.A.

## N.Y. cops gun down Black and Latino youth

BY ED WARREN

NEW YORK — A rash of cop killings have occurred in this city since the beginning of the year. From January 26 through February 9 alone, five people were gunned down by police, including three teenagers.

Some 300 people, angered by the killing of 14-year-old Jose Luis Lebron, marched from Brooklyn's Bushwick Park to the 83rd Police Precinct February 3. Lebron was shot by Officer Frank Albergo who claimed that the youth was reaching for a weapon, but none was found.

Drawing participants from the mostly Latino community along their route, the demonstrators went to the site where the killing occurred, chanting, "Fight the power!" and "Jail the killer cops!" After a rally marchers

said that "Puerto Ricans are useless." Lara's family is from Ecuador.

In November his mother was made to sign an affidavit agreeing not to take action against the cops in return for charges of auto theft against the youth being dropped. But she changed her mind after reading that Lebron had been killed by Albergo.

Louis Liranso, 17, was killed January 27 in the Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn after he had been apprehended by police and put up against a wall. Police said that Officer Hyda Hernandez shot him when he made a "quick jerking motion." Hernandez was suspended for two weeks and reassigned to a desk job by Police Commissioner Lee Brown.

The youngest cop victim was 13-year-old Robert Cole. Cops charged that Cole approached a patrol car and brandished a pistol. Police also claimed that they found 35 vials of crack cocaine in the Black youth's jacket pockets. Mayor David Dinkins, who has taken no action in any of the cop killings, said Cole's killing appeared to be justified because the youth was "dealing in drugs." A candlelight vigil was held for Cole in Harlem.

The latest victim of the cop killing spree is Derrick Armstrong, gunned down while being chased by police. An officer claimed Armstrong "twisted" in his direction. Police charge that a robbery victim identified the 27-year-old as one of four people who had robbed him of \$20.

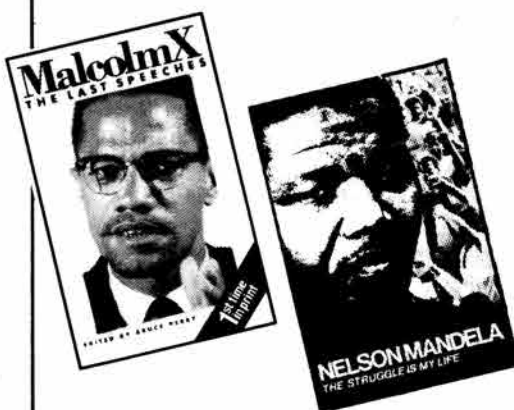
### 5 people shot dead in 2-week period; protests held in Brooklyn.

returned to the park where the young crowd continued their chants and calls for justice.

At Lebron's funeral February 8, the family was met by 200 mourners inside the church and hundreds more outside, including two busloads of Lebron's classmates. Following the services a protest was held on the steps of City Hall. There Rueben Lebron, the victim's brother, said actions would continue until Albergo is charged with murder and convicted.

Albergo and other cops in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn are known to area residents for their brutality. In another case, 15-year-old Luis Lara charged that Albergo had beaten him. Police claimed that Lara had been pulled over for car theft last August. Lara suffered a broken rib and multiple lacerations on the face and head as a result of the beating.

Lara's mother reported that she was verbally abused by Albergo and other precinct officers when she tried to explain that her son could not drive. Cops called her a "liar" and



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# Nicaraguan garment workers discuss economy, draft as elections near

BY SETH GALINSKY

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — On February 25 voters here will choose among candidates for president, vice-president, national assembly, and municipal offices. Incumbent Daniel Ortega is the presidential candidate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). His main opponent is Violeta Chamorro of the U.S.-backed National Opposition Union (UNO). Eight other parties are also fielding slates.

During seven days working at the state-owned Enaves garment factory as a floor helper, this reporter heard many discussions on the elections unfold on the shop floor.

Workers who support the Sandinista National Liberation Front often cite the gains made by working people during the first 10 years of the revolution as the main issue in the contest. Those who oppose the Sandinista Front view the economic crisis and the military draft as the most important questions. Many workers say they are unsure who they will vote for.

## Decline in industrial output

Industrial production in Nicaragua dropped 7 percent last year. Wages often do not keep up with inflation. The 400 workers at Enaves have been hard hit.

In January 1989 bonuses, frequently awarded in past years for good attendance or surpassing production quotas, were ended.

Workers used to receive two hot meals a day at the company cafeteria. Since June 1989 they have only gotten lunch. And at the beginning of this year the workweek was cut from five days to four with a reduction in pay.

One of the most important benefits is a free monthly allotment of products ranging from rice, beans, corn, and sugar to soap and matches. This was cut last month from 14 items to 8. The value of these goods still equals half the money wage of some workers.

Adilia, 43, has worked at Enaves for 11 years. "I'm inclined to vote for the Front," she says. "There have been a lot of benefits. Now the land belongs to the peasants."

"I'm one of those who were given houses by the revolution," she adds. Adilia thinks many of the economic problems the country faces are the result of U.S. intervention. "Nicaragua is so small," she says, "why do they have to stick their noses in here?"

Marlene, 22, agrees. "Maybe if there were



Workers at Nicaragua's state-owned garment factory Enaves

Militant/Seth Galinsky

no more war or aggression, this country would be better off." She fears that UNO would return Enaves to private hands. "With sales way down, this factory would have been closed if it were privately owned. But since it belongs to the state they don't want to lay anyone off."

Some workers blame the economic crisis on the FSLN. Gloria, 40, an operator, makes sure that everyone within earshot knows what she thinks. She often trades friendly and sometimes not-so-friendly barbs with FSLN supporters.

"We need a change," Gloria says. "The FSLN has been in power for 10 years and look at how bad things are. Inflation is skyrocketing. Sometimes we don't have enough to eat."

Gloria's outspoken criticism has made her a target of FSLN supporters in the plant, who try to convince her to vote for their party.

"If it weren't for the war and the economic blockade, just imagine what we could have done during these 10 years of revolution," Javier tells Gloria while other workers listen

in. Javier is the mechanics' supervisor. "The contras destroyed hundreds of cooperatives, health clinics, and schools."

"Everything will be better after the elections," he says, repeating the main slogan of the FSLN campaign. "With an overwhelming victory for the Front, we will have peace and good relations with the United States without giving up our sovereignty."

## 'UNO is my salvation'

Workers at Enaves are sharply divided over the continuation of the draft. Men between 17 and 24 years of age must serve two years in the army.

Marlo, 16, most days wears a "Daniel, president" hat. However he says, "UNO is my salvation. I'm going to vote for them because they are against the draft."

Mechanic Julio César, 26, disagrees. He volunteered for the military instead of waiting to be drafted. "I went so that Nicaragua could be free once and for all," he says. "I'm sticking with the Front."

Ana Luisa, a floor helper, is a member of the Sandinista Youth. She works with Yamileth, an operator, who says, "I'm against the Front." They are both 19.

Yamileth opposes the draft. "Would you like it if they took away one of your sons and sent him off to the mountains?" she asks Ana Luisa.

"The draft is necessary," Ana Luisa responds. "Otherwise the contras would have entered the cities and it would be just like under Somoza, when the National Guard killed people all over the place."

## 'FSLN means benefits'

Chilo, who has worked at Enaves for 14 years, sews waistbands on blue jeans. She is a member of the FSLN.

"As far as I'm concerned the Front has made mistakes but it has also done a lot of good things and brought us benefits," she says. "Under Somoza things were worse. Now transportation and meals are free."

"Many women only think about the draft, but I tell them that if it weren't for the war, military service would be easy for their sons."

Chilo says that UNO is made up of politicians who ruled Nicaragua before the revolution. "They want to return to the past. What have they ever done for us?" she asks.

Many workers are skeptical that anything will change with the elections. As far as Nora, an operator in her 40s, is concerned, "All the parties are the same. I don't even know if I'm going to vote."

"Maybe it's better to keep the ones in power," she adds. "They already have full bellies. If we put in someone new they arrive hungry and will want to fill up at our expense."

## Vote is secret

Like many workers, Sonia, 27, a trimmer, believes the secret vote is a right. She refuses

to say how she will mark her ballot.

"We know the ones in power now," she adds. "Who knows how other politicians would be in their place?"

Emma, a Black worker from Bluefields, also declines to say who she will vote for. "The problem here is the present government," she asserts. "They don't know how to govern. The prices of everything are always going up."

Dozens of workers arrive at the plant each day wearing FSLN T-shirts and hats. According to one rumor, a worker who arrived with an UNO shirt was threatened with being fired. Miriam, the head supervisor, denies this. "I think that even the workers who are hard-core UNO are ashamed to come here with their propaganda because they know this is a state factory."

None of the other political parties has a visible presence in the plant.

## Petition campaign

During working hours, Miriam, the supervisor, circulated a petition in support of the candidates of the FSLN.

Most workers signed, even those opposed to the FSLN. Some, like Gloria, refused to add their names. After arguing heatedly for a moment, Miriam told her, "You don't have to. This is a free country."

Yadira, an UNO supporter, also signed the petition. "What really counts is how I vote on the 25th," she says.

Marisol, a young floor helper, has talked to most of her coworkers about the election. She estimates that 25 percent are for the FSLN, 10 to 15 percent for UNO, and the rest undecided.

## FSLN seeks workers' votes

One day the FSLN and the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) organized a meeting in the plant to explain why workers should vote for the Sandinista Front. Department supervisors told everyone to stop work and join the assembly.

Cristóbal, production manager and political secretary of the FSLN at Enaves, summarized the Sandinista Front's platform for the elections.

"The Front's program is realistic," Cristóbal told the workers. "It calls for strengthening the mixed economy, equal rights for women, wages linked to productivity, and the construction of more parks and recreation centers."

Cristóbal then asked if there were any questions about the FSLN program or the elections. Several women raised complaints about the food served at lunch and the cost of medicine at the Enaves health clinic, but none of the workers spoke about the elections.

Sergio, union president at Enaves and an employee in the accounting department, told the workers to be patient. "Right now we're tied up with the elections. But after the 25th we'll start working on these problems right away."

"After the elections everything will be better," someone shouted out, to the laughter of about a third of the participants, including FSLN supporters.

The next day workers from several nearby factories joined those from Enaves at a rally before lunch to greet FSLN leader Luis Carrión, the minister of the economy.

While a couple of hundred workers closest to the stage applauded Carrión warmly, about half of the crowd of 600 paid little attention. They remained on the fringes or talked quietly among themselves.

"In these elections the choice is between revolution and counterrevolution," Carrión said. "UNO dreams about replacing the Sandinista People's Army with an army of the contras and former guardsmen. They want to return to the time when workers were killed for speaking out."

"We know that there are some compañeros who, because of the difficult economic situation, are thinking about voting for UNO. We have to convince them not to support the opposition," he stated.

"The triumph of the Sandinista Front is guaranteed," Carrión said. "But it is not enough to win. We must win overwhelmingly to make sure the United States is not tempted to continue the war."

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Workers in kitchen at Jinotepe Regional Hospital

Militant/Susan Apstein

# Public hospitals in Nicaragua open private wards for paying patients

BY SUSAN APSTEIN

JINOTEPE, Nicaragua — If you have money to pay for a room at the regional hospital here you will have privacy, air-conditioning, clean surroundings, and a nursing station devoted to you and a handful of other patients in a separate wing. If not, you will be put into a crowded general ward, with scant attention from an overworked staff, and maybe one sheet to a bed.

Nine months ago a pilot project began here that brought back private wings in public hospitals for the first time since July 1979, when the Somoza dictatorship was overthrown and the two-tier setup was abolished.

In Managua, the Bertha Calderón women's hospital has also inaugurated a private unit. Several other hospitals throughout the country are discussing opening up rooms for *pensionados*, as the patients are known. This was the term used for those whose money bought them private rooms and preferential treatment in hospitals before the revolution.

The new plan is not widely known in Nicaragua. There has been no public announcement, and no news coverage about it. When asked by a reporter, Assistant Director Josefina Medrano from the Managua region of the Ministry of Health flatly denied that any such program exists anywhere in the country.

Officials of Fetsalud, the national health

workers' union, were also initially reluctant to discuss the project. National executive board member Andrés Zamora recounted that at first some union leaders had opposed it.

However, the union has adopted a stance of accepting the new program while pushing for what it terms "union control" over aspects of it. The union, Zamora said, will try to insure that part of the money from paying patients goes to hospital improvements and better conditions for health workers. "Our position is that the union should regulate even the prices doctors are charging," he said.

At Jinotepe Regional Hospital, Teodoro Aburto, head of the Fetsalud local, said many union members there had fought the new arrangement. "We had a hard time convincing them we weren't returning to the past," he added. Hospital workers were sure the private rooms would be for the privileged classes, who would have everything, while other patients would be looked down on, "just like under Somoza," Aburto explained.

Union officials responded by arguing that bringing the private patients into the hospital would lead to improved conditions in the general wards because it would be a source of income for the hospital.

In the past two years funds for the Ministry of Health were cut 40 percent, and hospital budgets everywhere have been reduced.

Before the revolution, an entire section of the Jinotepe hospital was devoted to those who could afford to pay. Today six private and semiprivate rooms, eight beds in all, accommodate paying patients at one end of the area that once served 16.

The pre-1979 wooden sign "Private" above the wing was never removed. Today it again sets the area apart from the rest of the institution.

According to Juan José Narváez, the hospital administrator, the "typical patient" in the paying ward is the owner of a medium- or large-sized coffee farm.

The service is mainly used for surgery. Patients pay the equivalent of \$25 a day for the room, plus charges for the surgical facilities, anesthesia, and medicine. "And, of course, their doctor's fee," Narváez added. "Just like in a private hospital." (A factory worker in Managua makes about \$40 a month.)

Large, air-conditioned private rooms connect to a courtyard that will be converted into individual patios. The unit has its own nursing station, and the administration plans to hire workers who will care for those who pay only.

## Overcrowded wards

In the public wards, with 12 and 15 people to a room, Aburto said, "It is no good — it's too crowded." In broken-down beds, sometimes a cot when no beds are available, patients are cared for by family members. Relatives change dressings, wash and feed patients, and empty bedpans.

The hospital's budget allows for a meager breakfast for those in the general ward — coffee, beans with cream, maybe a piece of bread. Private patients get coffee, juice, eggs, and toast with butter and jam.

The hospital nutritionist described caring for a woman who wanted a special soup the kitchen did not have. "We had to send someone out to go find this soup. What could we do?" She shrugged, "It was a paying patient."

According to Aburto, union leaders are demanding that health workers who care for private patients receive wage incentives. The nursing staff gets no extra pay for added work. Because the patients are much more demanding than the others, Aburto said, the workers should be paid more.

## 'Charity cases'

At the Bertha Calderón women's hospital in Managua, Director Maritza Quant described how the private ward was reestablished. "At first I said I absolutely would not allow private patients in my hospital," she stressed. "I thought it would be a violation of my revolutionary principles — the right of free health care for our people."

Before the revolution, she said, "if a doctor was attending a patient here and I walked in with my money, that doctor would be at my side immediately. Others were considered 'charity cases,' with no rights at all.

"I was an intern in 1978, one of the saddest, most difficult years for me, when I saw how all this worked. I did not want a return of this system."

No hospital specializing in women's health care existed before the revolution. Quant pointed to the high rate of infant mortality, 120 per 1,000 live births, as an indicator of the scarce resources the Somoza dictatorship devoted to health care for women. In 1988, the rate of infant mortality had been reduced to 62 per 1,000.

But with 40 to 50 births per day, the maternity ward at Bertha Calderón faces a problem of overcrowding. Two women to a bed, with their newborn infants between them, is a common sight in rooms with up to 10 beds and no partitions.

Lack of sufficient staff has made just keeping wards clean a losing battle. In this and other areas of the hospital, some floors are strewn with used gauze, discarded bandages, and garbage.

Leaning across her desk, Quant said, "It was our doctors who kept insisting we should let private patients into the hospital."

"In fact," she added, "I often explain that I was practically forced into it. One day a doctor brought one of his private patients into my office. He said, 'Here she is. If we don't give the idea a try, we'll never know if it works.'"

According to Quant, the doctors wanted a place they could bring the private patients for surgery, because they said they couldn't afford the fees charged for use of operating facilities at private hospitals.

More than 90 percent of the doctors at the hospital — and throughout the public health system — also have a private practice. They typically work a half day at their government job and the other half in their own office or a private clinic.

## Surgery patients

Quant said she agreed to set up the project for surgery primarily, but only under certain conditions. Care of private patients could not interfere with doctors' treatment of those in the general ward. And the paid surgery could only be performed in the afternoon.

The clean, four-bed private unit includes a bathroom, nursing station, and refrigerator. Quant insisted that paying patients receive no special treatment aside from the privacy of their room, adding, "Perhaps the registration process is quicker."

She points to the project's success in keeping doctors at Bertha Calderón from leaving the hospital. At the same time, Quant emphasized, the plan brings in badly needed funds, used to improve services for all.

The new system, she said, "is a good example of the mixed economy in Nicaragua — the public and private sector working together."

Most doctors support the introduction of private wards since it will increase their income. Some, however, believe it is a move away from an earlier commitment to health care as a right of all Nicaraguans, regardless of ability to pay.

Dr. Moisés Morada of the Lenin Fonseca Hospital believes that conditions do not exist in Nicaragua to have a completely public health system. "Some think introducing private wards means taking a step backward in the health field," he said. "But it's really taking stock of the social and economic conditions we face."

Narváez and Aburto reported that the Jinotepe Regional Hospital is looking for ways to expand the pilot project. A private unit has been opened at the public hospital in Rivas, they said, and is under discussion in Matagalpa and elsewhere.

Will there be more private wards at Bertha Calderón? Quant is hopeful that a donation will allow construction of an annex for private patients. "It's a project that lies in the future."

But as for the new private system, she said, "I don't see how it can be stopped."

## Marchers hit repression in Haiti, tortured trade unionist released

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL — More than 1,000 people marched through downtown here February 7 as part of an international day of actions marking the fourth anniversary of the ouster of hated U.S. government-backed dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier. Demonstrators expressed their opposition to the current military government headed by Gen. Prosper Avril and its wave of repression.

Supporters of democratic rights in Haiti also marched in cities in the United States, France, Belgium, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Puerto Rico.

Speaking to the Montréal demonstrators, who were mostly workers of Haitian origin, Gerald Larose, president of the Québec-based Confederation of National Trade Unions, expressed "the solidarity of Québécois workers" and pledged aid to the just fight of the Haitian people.

Louis Roy, a coauthor of Haiti's 1987 constitution who was recently expelled from the country by General Avril, called on people across Canada to pressure the federal government to use all necessary means to get rid of the "terrorist Duvalierist regime of Prosper Avril."

Some 25 activists attended the Forum Lutte Ouvrière/Militant Labor Forum on February 10 where a panel discussion took place on the Haitian struggle and the solidarity movement. Panelists included Serge Bouchereau, a leader of the Coordinating Committee in Solidarity with the Struggle of the Haitian People (CCSCPH); Yves Richard, secretary-general of the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH); Guy Roumer from the New York-based *Haiti Progrès*; and Annette Kouri of the Communist League.

Participants at the meeting were urged by Bouchereau to circulate a petition launched

by the CCSCPH demanding that the Canadian government pressure the Haitian government to release all political prisoners in Haiti.

On February 7 Gen. Prosper Avril, head of Haiti's military government, declared an amnesty for political prisoners, including three union and popular leaders arrested in November and activists detained during the recent state of siege.

Those released include Jean-Auguste Mesyeux, executive secretary of the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers; Marino Etienne of the September 17 Popular Organization; and Evans Paul from the Confederation of Democratic Unity. After the three leaders were arrested and imprisoned November 1, an international protest campaign was waged demanding their release.

Evans Paul remains partly paralyzed as a result of the torture he underwent in prison. "I cannot walk well nor can I stay on my feet for too long," he said after his release. Etienne was blinded in his right eye and one of his eardrums was pierced. Mesyeux was also seriously injured.

Also freed in the amnesty were Frantz-Patrick Beauchard of the September 17 Popular Organization; Sylvain Jolibois, leader of the Jean-Jacques Dessalines Group; and others.

Under the state of siege ordered by Avril January 20, four articles of the Haitian constitution were suspended, including one barring forced deportations. In addition, dozens of political activists and opposition figures were arrested and beaten, and some were deported.

Avril lifted the state of siege January 29 and ordered the suspended articles of the constitution restored.



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## GEORGIA

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**Celebrate International Women's Day.** Panel discussion. Sat., March 10, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

## NEW YORK

### Brooklyn

**Speakout: Protest Cop Killings of Black and Latino Youth.** Speakers: Ed Warren, Socialist

Workers Party; others. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m. 464 Bergen. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (718) 398-6983.

## UTAH

### Salt Lake City

**Prospects for Working People in the 1990s.** Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, 2nd C.D. Translation to Spanish. Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor

Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (801) 355-1124.

## BRITAIN

### Cardiff

**Rally to Defend Mark Curtis.** Speakers: Kate Kaku, leader of Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Curtis' wife; Will Carroll, secretary Amalgamated Engineering Union stewards committee at Renolds. Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m. 9 Moira Terrace, Adamsdown. Donation: £1. Sponsor: Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call 0222-484677.

## ICELAND

### Reykjavik

**Building Socialism in Cuba.** Meeting to celebrate publication of *In Defense of Socialism* by Fidel Castro. Speakers: Amado Rivero, Nordic section of the Committee in Solidarity with the Peoples (ICAP); others. Sat., March 3, 5 p.m. Skipholt 50. Sponsors: Iceland-Cuba Friendship Assoc., Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (91) 17513.

## SWEDEN

### Stockholm

**After the U.S. Invasion of Panama: Increased Threats Against Central America and Cuba.** Speakers: Puksu Igualakinya, Committee Against Invasion of Panama; Birgitta Isacson, member Metal Workers' Union Local 31. Sat., March 3, 2 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (08) 31 69 33.

**One Day Longer Than Lorenzo.** The Year-long Strike Against Eastern Airlines. Speaker: Carl-Eric Isacson. Sat., March 10, 2 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (08) 31 69 33.

## U.S. hands off Cuba!

## Escalating provocations against the Cuban revolution

### Morgantown, W.Va.

Speaker: Militant reporter  
**Cindy Jaquith**  
just returned from Cuba  
Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m.  
West Virginia University  
White Hall, Room G-21,  
Willey St.

Donation: \$3. Auspices: Young Socialist Alliance. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

### Montréal

Speaker: Lutte ouvrière reporter  
**Michel Dugré**  
just returned from Cuba  
Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m.  
Librairie Pathfinder  
6566, boul. St-Laurent

Donation: \$3. Auspices: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

## For Black History Month...

## ALABAMA

### Birmingham

**Celebrate the Release of Nelson Mandela.** Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$3. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

## CALIFORNIA

### Los Angeles

**Malcolm X: The Importance of His Ideas for Today.** Discussion of new book *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. Speaker: Eli Green, Pathfinder Bookstore. Sat., Feb. 24, 7 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

## FLORIDA

### Miami

**Malcolm X: An Outstanding American Revolutionary.** Speaker: representative of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$2. Translation to Spanish and Creole. For more information call (305) 756-1020.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**A Tribute to Malcolm X.** Mon., Feb. 26, 3-5 p.m. 301 McPheeters-Dennis, Clark-Atlanta Univ. Sponsor: Clark-Atlanta Univ. History Dept.

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Boston

**Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.** Celebrate publication of new book. Speakers: Louis Elisa, president Boston chapter NAACP; Mel King; Byron Rushing, Massachusetts state representative; Betsy Soares, Socialist Workers Party; Gus Newport, executive director Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, former mayor Berkeley, California; Ellen Convisser, president Boston National Organization for Women; Valerie Hamilton, youth advocate. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. Roxbury Community College Student Center, 3rd floor. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**Malcolm X: The Role of His Ideas Today.** Video and presentation. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. 5019½ Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. For more information call (313) 831-1177.

## MINNESOTA

### Minneapolis

**Celebrate the Publication of Malcolm X: The Last Speeches.** Speakers: Garnez Parks, Black law student leader, University of Minnesota; Chris Nisan, Africana Student Cultural Association, U of M; Justin Atwood, high school student activist; August Nimitz, Socialist Workers Party; Denise McInerney, Young Socialist Alliance; Lynn Hinkle, member United Auto Workers Local 879 Executive Board. Sat., Feb. 24. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsors: Pathfinder Bookstore, Africana Student Cultural Center. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

## NEW JERSEY

### Newark

**Malcolm X: His Relevance for Today's Struggles.** Speakers: Valerie Caffee, president New Jersey Anti-Apartheid Mobilization Coalition; Rich Ariza, Socialist Workers Party; representative African National Congress of South Africa. Sat., Feb. 24. Reception, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$5. Sponsor: Pathfinder Bookstore. For more information call (201) 433-3341.

## NEW YORK

### Manhattan

Events held at 191 7th Ave. For more information call (212) 675-6740

**Malcolm X: The Meaning of His Ideas for Today.** Video and speaker: Derek Bracey, member National Committee, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m.

**Cuba's Role in Southern Africa.** Panel discussion. Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m.

## NORTH CAROLINA

### Greensboro

**Malcolm X: The Man and His Ideas.** Discussion based on the newly released Pathfinder book *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*. Thurs., March 1, 7 p.m. Elliot Center, UNCG. Cosponsors: Pathfinder Bookstore, Neo-Black Society, Black Studies Committee of the University of N.C.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Philadelphia

**South Africa: The Defiance Campaign.** Sat., Feb. 24, 7 p.m. 9 E Cheltenham Ave. Donation: \$2. For more information call (215) 848-5044.

## Pittsburgh

**New Stage in the South African Revolution.** Speakers: Dennis Brutus, Black Studies Dept., Univ. of Pittsburgh; Sello Miygo Thole, South African student from Soweto. Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m. 4905 Penn Ave. Donation: \$3. For more information call (412) 362-6767.

## TEXAS

### Houston

**Malcolm X Today.** Speakers: Ester King, community activist; Franklin Jones, professor at Texas Southern Univ. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Malcolm X: Internationalist Leader for All Working People.** Speaker: Emily Fitzsimmons, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. 3165 Mt. Pleasant NW. Donation: \$3. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

## BRITAIN

### London

**From a Free Mandela to a Free South Africa.** Speaker: representative of Communist League. Fri., March 9, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 01-928-7947.

### Manchester

**Thomas Sankara Speaks.** Film interview with Thomas Sankara. Wed., Feb. 28, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Sponsor: New International Forums. For more information call 061-839 1766.

## CANADA

### Montréal

**Political Heritage of Malcolm X.** Speaker: Steve Penner, executive secretary Communist League. Sat., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m. 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte Ouvrière. For more information call (514) 273-2503.

### Toronto

**The Legacy of Malcolm X: Forging a Revolutionary Leadership Today.** Speaker: Steve Penner, executive secretary Communist League. Sat., March 3, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W, Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

All programs sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum except where indicated.

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**Wellington:** 23 Majoribanks St., Courtenay Pl. Postal address: P.O. Box 9092. Tel: (4) 844-205.

## SWEDEN

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**To your health!** — “Despite claims of rigorous oversight by both the industry and some major states, benzene, a carcinogen, remained undetected in Perrier for about six



Harry Ring

months and was only finally discovered by chance.” — *New York Times*.

**Lucky Pierre** — Evian, the French company which markets

Perrier, said it is developing “environmentally sound” ways to dispose of the 160 million bottles recalled worldwide. They said this could include dumping the water into a local sewer system.

**Eastern and the IAM** — “The empire of Frank Lorenzo, the chairman of Texas Air Corp., is in serious, serious trouble. And it couldn’t happen to a nicer guy. . . . When Lorenzo took over Eastern in 1986, he was hailed as a genius. . . . What an irony it will be if Eastern turns out to be what sinks him.” — Allan Sloan in *New York Newsday*.

**Best with no-stick dentures** — British meat companies plan to market “steaks” composed of meat

scraps held together by a blood gel developed to bind wounds. Understandably, the industry is reluctant to label the new product. One member of Parliament called it “super-glue meat” and said that, if allowed, it should be labeled, “artificially restructured meat.”

**Insecure?** — The *New York Times* frets that several books on Wall Street greed are best-sellers. It cites one analyst who says this suggests that people are becoming less favorable to business and finance. The paper adds, “His views are shared by many on Wall Street who worry that if the economy weakens and unemployment rises, public attitudes toward business could turn hostile.”

**Relax and enjoy your flight** — Some Velcro fasteners are said to be so strong that they’re being considered as a replacement for rivets on aircraft.

**First things first** — Rep. James Courter, whose stand against abortion rights was seen as costing him the New Jersey gubernatorial election, now favors a woman’s right to choose. An aide said it was an “excruciating” decision.

**They could test their stools** — A bill before the Washington state legislature would require members to submit to urine drug tests. One legislator said he was for it, provided it didn’t prompt someone to

submit a bill requiring an IQ test as well.

**Recidivist** — A West Bank Israeli military court fined Najla al-Haj, 16, \$250 for possessing Palestinian flags and pictures of Yasser Arafat. Two months earlier, she was jailed for three days and fined \$750 for possessing the same material.

**Expanding Israeli arsenal** — Outpacing its Palestinian adversaries, the Israeli army has developed a rock thrower that hurls 600 egg-sized rocks a minute. Next maybe they’ll invent a machine that pours out revolutionary determination.

## Pittston miners’ long fight against union-busting

Continued from Page 8

Another scheduling option is 10-hour days for four days a week.

Miners have consistently fought against around-the-clock production for reasons of safety. It takes a toll on miners’ health and doesn’t allow coal dust, which causes lung diseases, to settle. Government statistics indicate that some 55 deaths and 10,000–16,000 injuries each year are caused by explosions, cave-ins, and other mine accidents. In addition, 4,000 miners die each year from lung diseases.

With the agreement, miners at Pittston will get an across-the-board hourly wage increase of 40 cents which puts them 65 cents below miners under the BCOA pact. Also, four out of five job openings at Pittston’s nonunion mines must be filled with laid-off union miners, and if Pittston subcontracts production to another operator, 19 out of 20 job openings go to union miners laid off at Pittston. Miners will receive a ratification bonus of \$1,000.

“I can live with most of it,” said Wayne

Gring from Castlewood, Virginia. “I don’t like the floating shifts because it’s hazardous to your health.”

### Victimized miners

One point many miners disagreed with is the fact that 13 miners — seven in Virginia, three in Kentucky, and three in West Virginia — who have been fired by Pittston for “picket line violence,” are not getting their jobs back. Many miners who voted against the contract cited this as the main reason.

“That’s a sticking point in a lot of our minds,” said Terry Collins of Logan County, West Virginia.

A rank-and-file miner in Virginia said, “Nobody should go back until we all do.” Bud Smith of Logan County walked out of the contract meeting when he heard about the 13. “We’ve got 13 men fired, why even look at the contract?”

“It’s like being promised a new bicycle for Christmas — and it’s got flat tires on it,” said Charles Smith of Chapmanville.

Bethal Purkey, president of UMWA Local 5815 said the firings weakened the union and next time people will be afraid to fight. More companies will try the same thing.

### Pittston demands suspensions

UMWA Vice-president Cecil Roberts said he wasn’t happy with the firings, but the Pittston negotiators demanded that the 13 men be suspended as a gesture to company foremen and guards. The men will get a fair hearing before the arbitrator, said Roberts, and if they don’t get their jobs back, the union will take care of them.

Gary Bryant, one of the 13 fired miners said, “That only lasts as long as Cecil Roberts is there — if somebody takes a shot at him, I better jump in front of the bullet. Because if he’s gone, I’m out.”

Some 175 striking miners who work at “truck mines” — mines leased from Pittston and mined by another operator, who then sells the mined coal back to Pittston — are also not covered by the contract.

Geraldine Earls, a member of UMWA Local 1760 in Jewel Valley, Virginia, has 11 years in the mines and played a very active role in the strike. She says some 400 miners like herself won’t have jobs to go back to now because the mines have been worked out by the scabs. On February 21, 300 miners received layoff notices. Nonetheless she’s

going to “concentrate on making sure that all the ‘truck’ miners get a contract” and support them by keeping the union hall open and running the food bank.

### Union stronger

Many miners stated they thought the union came out stronger, even if they didn’t get everything they fought for. Pittston striker James Gibbs noted the enormous amount of solidarity the miners got. “The churches, community groups, unions, and us sticking together” is what it took. “We’re much stronger coming out of this.”

Edna Sauls of Virginia said the Daughters of Mother Jones will be building the women miners’ conference in June. “We’ll stay organized and go help other strikers,” said another member.

“Once we’re back to work we’ll be helping the Eastern strikers like other unions helped us,” said a Pittston miner at Camp Solidarity shortly after the pact was ratified.

Terry Varney, vice-president of UMWA Local 5737 in Stone, Kentucky, said that before the Pittston strike “our local sat back in our easy chairs and took things for granted. The strike forced us to pull together.”

“The strike brought out feelings of comradeship and brotherhood that under normal circumstances lie dormant.”

## Mandela speaks in Soweto

Continued from Page 11

free nonracial, democratic, united South Africa that we have struggled and died for.

Comrades, I came here expecting to see not only the comrades who are here, but also comrade Elias Motsoaledi, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Oscar Mpheta, Harry Gwala. I am told that, with exception of Comrade Raymond Mhlaba, they are all ill and it is my wish that they all have a complete and speedy recovery so that they again can come and lead us.

You know very well that our president, Comrade Oliver Tambo, is not well. It is my intention, subject to what the National Reception Committee may decide, to visit our headquarters in Lusaka, to go and thank personally those remarkable men and women who have put our organization in an unprecedented position to win the new South Africa that we are fighting for.

From Lusaka, I intend to visit Sweden, so that I can have the opportunity of shaking hands and congratulating the man who has led this movement.

Two days ago in my address in Cape Town, I told the audience that I have read on numerous occasions that it is not the kings and generals that make history, but the masses of

the people.

I have always believed in this, but not to the extent to which I now believe that basic principle because I have seen with my own eyes the masses of our people — the workers, the peasants, the doctors, the lawyers, the clergy, all our people — I have seen them making history and that is why all of us are here today.

In conclusion, I must repeat what Comrade Sisulu has said, it is proper that we should behave in a way worthy of disciplined freedom fighters and men who know what their duty is.

Let not a single head, not a window be broken when you leave this place. And remember that we have friends on death row and it is your struggle that has made the government to grant some sort of relief in this regard, and we sincerely hope that there are men among the government who will respond constructively to the demand that those men should be set free.

*i Africa!*

*i Africa!* Crowd responds.

*Mayibuye!* (Let it come back)

*Mayibuye!* Crowd responds.

*Amandla!* (Power)

*Ngawethu!* (It is ours) the crowd responds.

## Cuban gov’t economic measures

Continued from Page 3

just imagine what sort of changes there have been in the organization when people used to call each other comrades and now that word has been ruled out by some who now call each other ‘Mister, Misses, Miss. . . .’

Predicting that Comecon could become a “mixed association” including capitalist countries, Castro said, “we will remain in that institution — if it has any usefulness.”

The Cuban leader told the assembled trade unionists that with regard to Cuba’s trade agreements with countries in Eastern Europe, “we hope that in 1990 some of the existing trade agreements will still be honored. . . . But we don’t have any certainty, nor can we

have any.” For the years 1991 to 1995, there is total uncertainty, Castro explained.

He said a situation might develop in which, “because of our relations with the Eastern European countries or because of certain processes or factors in the Soviet Union, we would . . . be faced with an extremely serious lack of supplies. Keep in mind that all our fuel comes from the Soviet Union, and it might be reduced by a third or a half because of problems in the USSR, or it could even be cut completely.”

“We are working hard on this. . . . We’re trying to anticipate” the difficulties, Castro said. “But some things are beyond our control.”

## —10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

### THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Feb. 29, 1980

The FBI deliberately blocked prosecution of four Ku Klux Klan members identified as the perpetrators of the infamous 1963 bombing of a Black Birmingham church.

A fifth known suspect in the case was hired by the FBI two months later as an “informant.”

Four Black children died in the bombing. Now it is revealed that the FBI had eyewitnesses placing the Klanners at the scene of the murder. Yet it twice refused to prosecute them.

The revelation that the FBI deliberately shielded the church bombers came as the result of a Justice Department report — withheld for the past seven months and now leaked to the *New York Times* — on Gary Rowe, another racist killer on the FBI payroll.

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

March 1, 1965

Price 10¢

Malcolm X has been assassinated. He was the most uncompromising, incorruptible, and talented leader of this country’s 22 million oppressed, deprived, and insulted Black citizens.

The white power structure’s lying newspapers portrayed Malcolm X as a dangerous and threatening figure. He was dangerous — to the whole barbaric and degenerate system of racial oppression, South and North. He was threatening — to those who uphold and

profit from that system. He was a leader they feared because they knew his kind would never call a “moratorium” or “cooling off” period in the struggle of the Afro-American masses short of complete and total victory.

He won the admiration of the people of the teeming Black ghettos by his fearlessness and eloquence. They listened eagerly as, on television and radio or in the newspapers, he spoke the unvarnished truth about the mistreatment of his people in this country and told, with undiluted bitterness, just what the victims felt about it.

An outstanding feature of Malcolm’s life was his capacity for personal, intellectual, and political development. That his ideas had been broadened by his trips to Africa and the Near East is widely known. That his ideas on political and world problems were still evolving at express-train speed is attested by the last lengthy interview he gave, printed in the issue of the *Young Socialist* just off the press.

He founded two organizations. One, the Muslim Mosque, Inc., was to propagate Islam as it is practiced in Arab countries. The other, the Organization of Afro-American Unity, was to further the material interests and struggles of Black Americans. He was to have set forth the OAAU’s program in detail at the meeting where he was assassinated.

But broad features of the program had been made clear in previous statements and speeches. These included: unification of Black forces for the greatest possible strength in struggle for civil rights and human rights; control of Black organizations and their policies exclusively by Black people; a concerted economic and political attack on the unbearable conditions in the ghettos; and fostering of racial pride and solidarity with African nations.



## Vote FSLN on February 25!

On February 25 working people in Nicaragua should cast their ballot for the party which defends Nicaragua's sovereignty — the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

While most readers of the *Militant* are not eligible to vote in the national elections taking place in Nicaragua, the outcome is important for working people and all defenders of democratic rights internationally.

Since 1979 when a popular revolutionary upsurge toppled the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship, the FSLN has fought for Nicaragua's sovereignty against repeated attempts by the U.S. rulers to reimpose their control over the country of 3.5 million people.

The FSLN has maintained its right to have diplomatic, economic, and military relations with countries of its own choosing. Despite heavy pressure from Washington, the FSLN has maintained its ties with Cuba and the Soviet Union.

The FSLN organized workers and peasants to defend their country against the U.S.-organized and -funded contra war. Tens of thousands of Nicaraguans, young and old, gave their lives fighting the contra mercenaries and defending their newly won independence. The war did billions of dollars of economic damage to the country. Washington also imposed an economic embargo on Nicaragua

— a severe blow to an economy that depended on U.S. imports and export markets. The FSLN has consistently condemned this action and sought aid and assistance internationally to counter the devastating impact of this criminal move.

The current election process in Nicaragua has been challenged by the U.S. rulers, who demand sweeping powers to scrutinize every aspect of the campaigning and voting and arrogantly assert the right to declare whether the elections are "free and fair."

The FSLN's main opponent, the National Opposition Union (UNO), is a coalition of anti-FSLN groups. It makes no bones about its ties to Washington. Far from it. If victorious it would establish a government subservient to the U.S. rulers' economic and political interests.

While the FSLN condemned the U.S. invasion of Panama in December, UNO leaders rushed to welcome the puppet government installed there by U.S. military forces. Washington has allocated \$4 million to UNO in direct financing for the campaign.

The FSLN clearly stands for the right of the Nicaraguan people to their sovereignty and self-determination. Its victory over UNO in the elections would be a further demonstration that working people in that country refuse to bow to Washington's dictates.

## Malcolm X and today's fighters

Twenty-five years after he was cut down by assassins' bullets, Malcolm X has become the focus of renewed interest, especially among young people — Black, Latino, Asian, and white — in the United States and around the world. Copies of his speeches are increasingly in demand. His words are quoted in rap music. His portrait appears on murals, posters, T-shirts, and buttons.

The historic changes occurring in the world today are powerful impulses to this resurgence of interest in Malcolm X. They include the rising revolution in South Africa, the release of Nelson Mandela, the growing militancy among U.S. workers reflected in the Machinists strike against Eastern Airlines and the growing resistance of coal miners, as well as the grim realities of capitalist society — deepening inequalities, growing poverty, union-busting, racist violence, and war.

Malcolm X has become more than a symbol for those repelled by injustice. His ideas have become tools for those wanting to better understand the world and combat its evils. They provide rich material for fighters looking to chart a course forward.

Through his uncompromising commitment to the fight for Black rights, Malcolm confronted questions like those that workers on picket lines, antiracist activists, students protesting apartheid or U.S. intervention in Central America, defenders of abortion rights, and others run up against today.

Malcolm spoke the truth. He never flinched from it or compromised it. For him the truth was a weapon in the hands of the oppressed. His speeches remain powerful indictments of the hypocrisy and dehumanizing brutality of capitalism and those who are responsible for maintaining it.

But more than that, Malcolm fought to get Blacks and all

the oppressed to know the truth about themselves. When an interviewer asked, "Wake them up to their exploitation?" Malcolm answered, "No, to their humanity, to their own worth, and to their heritage."

He approached politics and the struggle for freedom from a world view. He reached beyond borders, narrow self-interest, and parochial concerns to link up with others fighting for their rights. Freedom, he would explain, could only be won in one place when it is won everywhere.

Malcolm taught that justice and freedom must be fought for "by any means necessary" and without any compromise with those who have a vested interest in the status quo, if the struggle is to succeed.

He concluded that capitalism and the imperialist system are so entangled with racism in North America and with the exploitation of the vast majority of humanity that they have to be uprooted through a revolution.

Malcolm's capacity for leadership — and why the rulers of this country feared him — are evident in his speeches. Those who killed him, however, attempted the impossible. They were unable to kill the struggle or alter the conditions that gave rise to a Malcolm X.

Malcolm was testimony — as were Maurice Bishop, Thomas Sankara, Fidel Castro, and Nelson Mandela — that the horrors of capitalism will bring forth revolutionary leaders committed to going all the way in the struggle against exploitation and oppression.

Pathfinder Press has published several volumes of Malcolm X's speeches. The most recent volume, *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, contains speeches never published before. Reading, studying, and getting these books into the hands of others, and joining the fight he gave his life for, are the best ways to pay tribute to Malcolm X.

## What's ahead in miners' fight

Continued from front page

far from quitting, will be among those who want to continue the fight. Pittston miners can now turn their attention to unfinished battles and new fronts.

It will take all the solidarity and power mustered by the Pittston miners, Eastern strikers, and other workers to force Pittston to rehire the 13 UMWA miners not permitted to return to work because of frame-up charges of "strike-related violence."

Mobilizing to put maximum pressure on the courts will be needed to ensure that the \$64 million in fines that remain against the mine union are unconditionally dropped.

The combat experience, militant spirit, renewed confidence, and dedication that UMWA miners have, coming out of their fight for a decent contract and a union at Pittston, can now be thrown into the battle against other union-busters — like A.T. Massey — throughout the coalfields.

Massey and other bosses need to be taught the same lesson Pittston learned: UMWA miners will fight to the end to defend their union and the gains they have won.

Union miners in the West are gearing up now for contract battles this year. Seasoned veterans at Pittston can add valuable weight in helping to organize broad support for their union brothers and sisters out West.

Above all, Pittston miners can help lead the way in

winning more solidarity in the fight against Lorenzo.

"We've got a lot of IOU's out there, and a good place to start is the Eastern strikers' rallies on March 3 and 4," Jack Barteel told a *Militant* reporter. Barteel is a member of UMWA Local 1259 in Virginia and owner of the land Camp Solidarity is on, which he leased to the union for \$1.

Pittston miners are shooting to fill 100 cars to the Washington, D.C., airport and other miners are headed for Greensboro, North Carolina; Pittsburgh; and other cities, he said.

From the onset of the strike, the *Militant* reported every week on the battle against Pittston and the broader resistance to union-busting that has developed in the coalfields. Many strikers learned they could count on the *Militant* for the truth about what miners and others are fighting for.

We will be continuing to increase our efforts in the coalfields to get the truth out about miners' fights, the Eastern strike, and struggles by working people internationally.

We appeal to all of our readers to let us know about struggles in your area. We invite readers to give any suggestions they have on where there are those being denied truthful reports about the struggles of working people. And we invite readers to join *Militant* coalfield sales teams and help introduce the paper to other fighters.

## The democratic revolution in South Africa

BY DOUG JENNESS

The unbanning of the African National Congress and other organizations in South Africa and the freeing of Nelson Mandela are momentous victories for the decades-long struggle to bring down apartheid rule. They are conquests of the mass struggle in which thousands of fighters have paid with their lives. And of the military victories by Cuban, Angolan, and South West Africa People's Organisation forces against Pretoria's troops.

The mass democratic movement has won significant new momentum and the road has been opened to making the next big gains in the revolutionary struggle.

The ANC leadership is seizing on the new situation of legality to organize the return of exiled activists and leaders, and it is projecting a course of more open activity inside

## LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

South Africa. It has taken the offensive in pressing the government for discussions and has assumed the initiative in calling for unity in the effort to rid South Africa of the apartheid system.

To get a better appreciation of the character of the revolutionary struggle and of its leadership, I urge *Militant* readers to read and study, with pencil in hand, the feature article, "The Coming Revolution in South Africa," by Jack Barnes in the *New Internationalist* No. 5. The *New Internationalist* is a magazine of Marxist politics and theory published in New York (see ad on page 10), and Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States.

The *New Internationalist* article, based on a 1985 report, describes the national, democratic revolution against the apartheid state and the system of racial segregation that it is based on. "Every aspect of life in South Africa is dominated, shaped, and restricted by the apartheid system," Barnes points out. The African peoples were robbed of their land and tools and "swept into the mines and factories, and onto capitalist plantations, as proletarians. But they were not free proletarians."

African workers in South Africa do not have the freedom to sell their labor power on the market on an equal basis with all other workers; and they don't have freedom to change jobs, to pick up and move from one part of the country to another, or even abroad. The apartheid capitalists, Barnes notes, have "evolved the most elaborate and extensive system of labor control seen on earth."

The hated pass system, the system of internal passports requiring Africans to carry a pass at all times, is a key instrument for controlling the life, employment, and movement of the African population.

Apartheid is an entire state structure of central, provincial, and local government bodies that institutionalizes and enforces the segregation of Africans. "Two things exist side by side in South Africa today," Barnes states. "There is the state of the white minority. And there is the emerging nation that is fighting its way into being by the only means possible: by struggling to overthrow the apartheid state and replace it with a democratic republic whose citizens will be all those who live in South Africa."

This struggle for a nonracial, national state in South Africa, which would include Africans, Coloureds, Indians, and whites, is at the heart of the demand for universal suffrage based on one person, one vote.

In addition, Barnes points out that the Freedom Charter adopted in 1955 by a broad congress of liberation fighters called for a land reform eliminating restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis and redividing the land among those who work it.

The demands for land, a nation, and a democratic republic are totally intertwined and provide a solid foundation for the program of the national, democratic revolution in South Africa, Barnes points out.

The SWP leader explains that it's important to recognize the democratic character of the unfolding revolution in South Africa and not mistakenly identify it as a stage in the socialist revolution. Committing this error would make it impossible to accurately judge the advances and setbacks of the struggle and what is posed for it to do next. It would lead to a defeat for the democratic revolution.

This democratic revolution will be made and led by working people, Barnes notes, and it will open the way to a transition to the socialist revolution. "But these are not merely stages of a single revolution; they are two revolutions."

Moreover, not being clear on the democratic character of the revolution can lead to incorrect criteria for judging the leadership of the struggle.

The ANC, Barnes states, won the leadership of the democratic revolution in South Africa. And it has based itself on the workers and rural toilers as the only way to lead the national, democratic revolution to overturn the apartheid state. It is the political vanguard of the democratic revolution, not a communist organization. It is out of the revolutionary struggle led by the ANC that a growing communist vanguard in South Africa will be forged.



# Seattle rail workers face new drug-testing rules

BY JEFF FORD  
AND MERRILL COHEN

SEATTLE — The Burlington Northern railroad, under new U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rules, implemented a sweeping random drug-testing program on January 16. All rail employees covered by the Hours of Service law — switchmen, brakemen, engineers, hostlers, firemen, dispatchers, and operators — are included under

## UNION TALK

these new regulations. Similar testing programs are beginning in the airline industry and for most transit workers. The regulations require that at least 25 percent of the total covered employees be randomly tested during 1990.

Under DOT rules, there are five kinds of drug testing: pre-employment, periodic, random, reasonable cause, and postaccident. Burlington Northern already has the four nonrandom forms of testing as part of its employment practices. The addition of random testing is a significant new escalation in government and employer attacks on workers' rights, carried out under the guise of the "war on drugs."

Under BN's program, the company can take an entire train crew — four people — off the job for testing if just one of its members is randomly chosen. After being tested, a worker's name goes back into the pool where he or she has an equal chance of being chosen on the next draw. One engineer explained that he had been "randomly" tested twice in the first two weeks of the program.

In addition, being subjected to any of the other categories of drug tests does not lessen your chances of also being randomly tested. If a worker is involved in a derailment for which he or she is tested for drugs, this would not prevent

the same worker from being randomly tested on the next shift back at work.

At Balmer rail yard, BN's main terminal in Seattle, the reaction of workers to the new testing is universally negative. Many feel the company and DOT have no right to presume a person guilty of breaking the law — with the onus on the worker to prove himself or herself innocent.

On the first day the new rules were in effect, at least two crews were pulled in for testing when their shifts were over. The women's restroom at the yard was converted into a test site. A woman associated with the test occupied the room while the employees provided the samples.

The United Transportation Union, which covers all switchmen, brakemen, and some engineers, reported in the January *UTU News* that it and other transportation unions have filed 22 lawsuits challenging random testing as a violation of the constitutional right to privacy. At the present time, alcohol is not included in random testing, and the UTU is fighting DOT proposals to make it a tested substance.

In a related development, the Federal Railroad Agency has proposed a new licensing procedure for engineers. The new rule allows the FRA to use an engineer's automobile driving record — including tickets for drunk driving or arrests for drugs — to deny renewals of the worker's engineer license.

Implementation of various drug-testing programs over the past few years is part of a stepped-up effort by the bosses and government to shift blame for industrial accidents and the lack of job safety onto the backs of workers.

Government regulators relax safety rules for airlines and other transportation industries, and the bosses turn a blind eye to safety hazards and prod workers to speed up the work by ignoring safety rules. Then, when an accident happens, the government, employers, and media raise a hue and cry, blaming "drugged workers."

Drug testing is also another way for the company to victimize union activists and to divide and harass all union

members. This will be even more of a question now as the union at BN heads toward contract negotiations. The company has given no indication that it intends to reverse its course, begun in 1985, of seeking more cutbacks and concessions from rail workers.

Drug testing is also a major invasion by the government and company of a worker's privacy. More and more corporations are trying to push a "company town" mentality onto the work force. Employee assistance programs (EAPs), which in theory are supposed to help employees with substance abuse or other problems, are also part of this effort. No matter what a worker's private problems are — money, alcohol, marital, or drug — we are supposed to look to the company for solutions. We are all a "family," the companies say. But, at contract time, being a member of the family doesn't stop "Dad" from trying to reach into your pocket to take back your allowance.

Many workers who have had experience with EAPs realize the cynicism of the company's half-hearted attempts at "rehabilitation," the main objective of which is to get the worker back on the job as fast as possible. No wonder some workers refer to these rehab and counseling programs as the "spin dry" solution.

The UTU is absolutely correct to fight random testing and should broaden the scope of its challenge to include all drug-testing programs and EAPs. Resistance to government and company attempts to curtail democratic rights and weaken union power is needed now and will strengthen our ability to defend ourselves as the capitalist crisis deepens and attacks on the labor movement mount.

Unionists should fight for programs that protect the privacy of workers from company prying, while allowing workers who need help to get it, including time off from work.

Jeff Ford and Merrill Cohen are UTU members. They work at BN's Balmer yard in Seattle.

## LETTERS

### Iceland protest

A forum was held January 24 at the Pathfinder Bookstore in Reykjavik to protest U.S. intervention in Panama and to support sovereignty for the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. The more than 20 participants in the meeting heard from Grétar Kristjánsson, a metal worker and leader of the newly formed Communist League of Iceland, who described the background to the invasion and the threats posed to Cuba, Nicaragua, and freedom fighters in the region.

Kristiina Björklund, who was working in Grenada in 1982, drew the parallels between the 1983 U.S. invasion of that country and the recent military intervention in Panama.

Thorkell Ingólfsson, a participant in a brigade to Cuba in 1988, pointed to the constant provocations by the U.S. government against Cuba and explained how the Cubans have organized to defend themselves.

Two other panelists had participated in brigades to Nicaragua.

Following the meeting, all the copies of the new Pathfinder pamphlet *Panama: The Truth About the U.S. Invasion* available in the bookstore were sold and two people bought subscriptions to the *Militant*. Gylfi Páll Hersir  
Reykjavik, Iceland

### 'Roger & Me'

Two thousand residents of the Flint, Michigan, area packed the hall for the taping of a Phil Donahue show discussing the popular anti-General Motors film *Roger & Me*. The film's director and producer, Michael Moore, was on hand to answer questions.

For several hours a heated debate took place between Flint residents, many of whom were laid-off auto workers, and the upper crust of Flint, like members of the Junior League and mayor's office and wives of GM executives.

Auto workers responded to the management line that there are plenty of jobs still in Flint, that the workers got what they deserved, and that the problem was abuse of company time and benefits.

When a GM executive's wife complained about worrying whether her husband would be home for din-

ner, the wife of a member of the United Auto Workers union responded, "Most of us are worried about being able to put dinner on the table."

Moore lambasted the well-heeled of Flint, saying, "The social problems that go with unemployment are due to an economic system that is unfair and unjust. The government is on the side of GM." He urged the audience to "get politically active to change society."

Mark Friedman  
Detroit, Michigan

### 'Porta-Sleepers'

It's interesting that Phoenix was chosen for a test run on those "Porta-Sleepers," the collapsible containers designed for the homeless mentioned in the February 16 "Great Society" column.

As the result of a prolonged real estate depression, there are a tremendous number of vacant dwellings in Phoenix. But all the homeless get are cardboard boxes.

Dave Salner  
Salt Lake City, Utah

### Marion Barry's 'crime'

In Margaret Leech's Pulitzer Prize winner, *Reveille in Washington*, the reader is offered a detailed picture of events in the District of Columbia during the Civil War that offer background to today's "get Mayor Barry" movement and the plight of Blacks in the city now.

Nestled between the slave states of Maryland and Virginia, the nation's capital was not the picture of democracy. The 1860 census counted 1,300 slaves, whose one-third of a vote belonged to their masters. Free Blacks were limited to quarters in an area near the water.

When Congress freed the slaves in the city in March 1862, each master received \$300 per slave, and the bill provided funds to send freed slaves "back to Africa," a favorite project of President Lincoln's.

The freed slaves were prohibited from attending school, using public transportation, and leaving their former master's property without permission. "Participating in public meetings" was a major crime. Large numbers of Blacks fleeing to Washington from slavery were herded into "construction battalions."



Blacks today constitute 70 percent of the city's population, a city with the highest infant mortality rate of any in the country. Statehood for the District of Columbia, always opposed by both capitalist parties, would guarantee two Black senators and Black congressional representatives.

Marion Barry's "crime" was not drug use. The rulers of Washington never could or would stand for an "uppity" Black — and that made him a criminal.

Paul Montauk  
Oakland, California

### Profit system

Like Mike Ritchald, who wrote to you that "socialism doesn't work" (*Militant*, January 26), I too am a college student and have these "many opportunities" that he so proudly boasts of. And I must agree with him that our profit-oriented, capitalist system is "far superior to any other," at least in supporting human rights violations throughout the world and sedating its own population with hypocrisy and lip service.

Just ask the thousands of victims of President Cristiani's death squads in El Salvador. Ask Pinochet how he managed to seize power from Salvador Allende in 1973. Ask Mark

Curtis if it's better that the government protect big business instead of workers.

"Long live capitalism" indeed! Only if it can protect the basic human rights of all, instead of allowing the exploitation of the majority by a profit-seeking minority.

Unfortunately capitalism has never had human welfare as one of its goals, but motivates its players for the acquisition of capital. With this in mind, it seems obvious to me that our American way only begs for and rewards corruption. Something else is needed, and the only way to get it is through popular struggle, just as all human rights have been obtained.

John Evenhuis  
La Jolla, California

### Censored?

Every time something major goes on in the Third World, the *Militant* — for some reason — doesn't reach me. For instance, when Reagan attacked Grenada and Libya — no *Militant*, so I never learned the truth about these matters. With Bush's attack on Panama — no *Militant*, so I'll never know the truth about this incident. No *Militants*, no truth.

I complain to the proper prison officials. But since they are not interested in the truth, they claim you

are not sending the paper. Without the *Militant* I am isolated by the capitalistic press, whose duty it is to control the minds of the masses "by any means necessary."

Ronald Reagan himself said on television, "It is not an unusual practice for us to give the American people misinformation." After such a bold statement, I wouldn't read anything but the *Militant*.

Have I been dropped from your prison program? I must have this paper.

A prisoner  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## Chemical plant releases toxic gas

### W. Virginia unionists protest Rhône-Poulenc's negligence

BY JIM ALTENBERG

INSTITUTE, W.Va. — Fifteen thousand residents of this industrial town outside Charleston were forced to stay indoors February 16 because of a toxic leak at a chemical plant. Five hundred gallons of acid vaporized at the Union Carbide and Rhône-Poulenc plant here, sending a poisonous cloud over the facility. It was the second accident in two weeks.

Unionists on strike against Pittston Coal, Elkem Metals, and Eastern Airlines had joined communications, construction, and other workers on a protest picket line at the plant just two days before. The 75 unionists were protesting the company's negligence surrounding the first leak, which involved methyl isocyanate, or MIC. MIC is the chemical that spewed out of Union Carbide's Bhopal, India, pesticide plant in 1984, killing thousands. The MIC unit at Institute is a clone of the one built in Bhopal.

The plant was owned entirely by Union Carbide until 1986, when a section of it was sold to Rhône-Poulenc. The facility is one of two dozen chemical plants along the Kanawha River.

#### Unsafe contracting outfit

Seven workers were exposed to the deadly chemical in the February 2 MIC accident and the eyesight of one was severely damaged. A hydrogen fire occurred the same day.

The seven workers injured were all employees of Brown & Root, one of the largest nonunion construction companies in the world. Rhône-Poulenc hired the outfit last September and granted it special permission to exempt its workers from various plant safety procedures.

Union activists at Rhône-Poulenc, including members of International Association of

Machinists Local 656, formed a coalition last fall called Safety and Full Employment (SAFE). Together with environmental activists and area residents the unionists have been trying to pressure the company to remove Brown & Root.

The picket line protesting the MIC leak was called by SAFE and was one of a series of events organized in response to the accident.

On February 9, 75 people confronted Rhône-Poulenc's plant manager Ron Bearer at a meeting sponsored by People Concerned About MIC held at West Virginia State College, which is in Institute.

This group, based in Institute where the majority are Blacks, was formed after an MIC leak in 1985 that sent 135 people to the hospital.

For the first time, plant workers, IAM members, and building trades unions joined community residents to protest the leak.

#### Company negligence

At the meeting, Bearer was forced to admit that Rhône-Poulenc refused to notify anyone of the MIC leak, despite procedures requiring them to do so.

In response to angry questions, Bearer

claimed that only one ounce of the deadly chemical had escaped. No plantwide alarm was sounded to alert workers and summon medical help. A "local" alarm, consisting of a flashing light visible in a single unit of the plant and that does not summon a medical team, was activated instead.

"You had seven men down with chemical poisoning and no general alarm? With no concern for them I don't know how you can be concerned with the people outside," said one worker during the meeting.

"How did you know no one was affected in the community? Did someone come out that day and see?" questioned another. Institute residents and college campus police reported odd smells and vaporous clouds in the area on the day of the leak.

Bearer promised it would not happen again and that new procedures requiring community notification and use of plantwide alarms were now in place. Workers exposed to chemicals would also be treated by a plant doctor, he said.

Many speakers at the meeting attacked Bearer's promises as repetitive statements the company makes every time an accident occurs.

## W. Virginia teachers escalate fight for better pay, benefits

BY MAGGIE McCRAW

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Some 6,000 public school teachers from 30 counties walked out of the classroom on February 15 and rallied at the state capitol here.

Backed by students, school service workers, bus drivers, and other unionists, the teachers brought their demands for better pay and benefits to the public and the state legislature.

In Logan County striking miners joined teachers on picket lines at some schools, picketed the county's bus garage, and attended the capitol rally. West Virginia Education Association spokeswoman Jackie Goodwin said about 200 teachers had attended the miners' Labor Day rally in September and that the WVEA passed a resolution supporting the strike against Pittston Coal Group.

Workers on strike at Elkem Metals near Charleston, an Eastern Airlines strike leader from Pittsburgh, and delegates to an AFL-CIO conference also participated.

While the majority of schools were closed for the rally, students from at least four other schools walked out to support the teachers.

Thirty Princeton High School students were suspended the following day for "roaming the halls, chanting and yelling."

Two dozen Poca Middle School students were suspended for five days for participating in a walkout of more than 200. Following a meeting with students and parents, the school administration rescinded the suspension and agreed to a 10-day "cooling off" period and an investigation of the students' punishment.

Salaries for West Virginia's 22,000 teachers rank 49th nationally at \$21,904 yearly. Teachers' union President Kayetta Meadows explained that they are demanding \$32 million to equalize pay scales among the state's teachers. The legislature last year voted to allocate these monies, which were saved when the state cut back the number of public school employees.

Other demands include an across-the-board raise, more funding for classroom supplies, and sufficient funding for the teachers' insurance and retirement plan, which has an unfunded liability of \$2 billion.

Leaders of the teachers' union also say they are not proposing higher taxes on working people.

Last year Gov. Gaston Caperton and the legislature raised taxes by \$400 million, the largest increase in West Virginia history. The bulk of these taxes fall on workers in the form of increased gasoline and sales taxes.

Some 200 coal companies, however, will write off \$60 million in taxes this year under a 1985 law passed to attract the General Motors-Saturn auto plant to West Virginia. A state senate committee last week reported that this law has allowed 20 percent of the state's coal to be mined tax free.

## Black students protest racist policies of Selma, Alabama, school board

BY DAVE FERGUSON

SELMA, Ala. — Black students ended a five-day sit-in at Selma High School on February 12. The 100 youths have been protesting discriminatory educational practices and the firing of the city's first Black superintendent, Norward Roussell.

The sit-in began three days after the city's 11 schools were closed by officials, blaming racial tensions among students. The protest followed a month of demonstrations to demand a renewed contract for Roussell.

The superintendent was fired by the school board following changes he made to equalize opportunities for Black and white students. Under his administration, the segregationist practice of tracking students according to their race and income was challenged.

Although the schools have been integrated since 1969, Blacks had been forced into inferior classes. Only 3 percent of Black students were assigned to Level 1 where they could take courses to prepare for college. The other 97 percent were locked into a substandard education.

At the urging of Black parents, Roussell in 1988 established more objective criteria for assigning levels. Some members of the school board immediately began looking for a way to fire him.

On Dec. 21, 1989, in a six-to-five vote, the school board decided not to renew Roussell's contract, which expires in June. The five Black members of the board resigned in protest. Demonstrations and school boycotts



Militant/Mary Imo  
Brown & Root, one of the world's largest nonunion construction companies, was exempted from safety procedures at the Rhône-Poulenc and Union Carbide plant.

## Pathfinder bookstores vandalized in Omaha and Kansas City

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Hours after Pathfinder Bookstore volunteers set up a window display celebrating Black History Month, two well-aimed shots were fired through the window. Two pictures of Malcolm X were hit.

The February 17 attack was the second against the bookstore in two months. On January 2 a rock was hurled through the window, where a "U.S. Out of Panama!" banner hung.

A February 19 press conference protesting the latest attack included representatives of the National Organization for Women, St. Stephen's and St. Mark's churches, the Socialist Workers Party, and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Messages were read from the International Office of the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee; Clinton Adams, a leader of the Coalition for Educational and Economic Justice; Nelson "Fuzzy" Thompson, president of the Greater Kansas City Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and Jan Behrend of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee.

BY DIANE SHUR

OMAHA, Neb. — The plate glass window of the Pathfinder Bookstore here was shattered February 18 by what appeared to be a home-made incendiary device. The window had a large display featuring *The Struggle is My Life* by Nelson Mandela and books by Malcolm X. It was the second vandal attack against the bookstore within a year.

Pathfinder Bookstore supporters are organizing a protest meeting for March 3 and have launched a campaign to press the city's mayor to speak out against the attack and order the police to conduct a serious investigation to apprehend those responsible.